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FREEDOM AND TRUTH

AND OTHER

SERMONS IN KING'S CHAPEL

With a Brief Historical Sketch

By

HOWARD N. BROWN, D.D.

BOSTON
W. B. CLARKE CO.

1816

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PREFACE.

THE writer of these sermons has had a long ministry of more than forty years. Nearly half the period of his active life has been spent in the work of King's Chapel. During this time many sermons of his have been published in pamphlet form. But pamphlets are not easily preserved, and some of his friends have expressed a wish to have a selection of these sermons put into more enduring shape. This book is made in response to that suggestion.

Its author believes in the method of freedom everywhere, so far as it can be with a fair degree of safety applied. Except where human life is actually at stake, as in war, or in the management of many of our mechanical contrivances, he thinks that something of efficiency may well be sacrificed to secure a larger amount of individual liberty. He believes this because none but a free mind can be trusted to engage in the pursuit of new truth, and because humanity cannot be safe in following any road where the clearest light of truth is not allowed to lead the way.

He believes also that the greatest illumination ever shed upon our pathway came through the life and teaching of Christ. There is, indeed, a light which lighteth

every man born into the world; but this should be greatly strengthened and increased in every mind could that mind see more clearly, through the mists of tradition, what the truth was to which Jesus came to bear witness. These sermons are the outcome of an ever-deepening conviction that the truth which Christ taught can be recovered for all that live, and that it is a truth which makes men free.

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FREEDOM AND TRUTH.

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.—
JOHN viii. 32.

If this saying at the time it was uttered was, in form, somewhat prophetic or oracular, the experience of the world in later years has brought to it such abundant confirmation that, whatever theoretical character it may have had at first, it is now turned into a practical certainty. Knowledge is the great emancipator. An educated people cannot be long kept in any state of slavery. As men learn the truth about themselves and about the world of which they make a part, as far as that truth can now be ascertained, they are set free from many burdensome superstitions that fasten upon the ignorant mind; and they are less and less inclined to bow to any authority whatever without independent examination on their own part of the grounds on which that authority is supposed to rest.

So true is this that the representatives of all great systems for the regulation of human conduct and belief are apt to be somewhat fearful of popular education. They may not have any doubt that their systems are divinely founded, and they may not be afraid of their actual downfall if people get to thinking much for themselves. But they know that, whatever the final result may be it is going to make, incidentally, an infinite deal of trouble for them and for all their class if the common people get enough knowledge to start investigations

on their own account. As knowledge grows from more to more, the power of individualism is sure to be increased. The man who knows cannot so easily be put in leading-strings and directed by higher powers in the way he should go. Inevitably he begins to have his own way of looking at things and to assert his right to live out his life according to his own ideas of what is wise and right.

In so far as men come to know the truth, any truth about any part of our human life, it does tend to make them free. Certain provinces of thought may be shut away from them, or they may themselves refuse to enter into the discussion of certain themes which they choose to regard as unfit for investigation by their own reason; but when once they have set out on the quest for knowledge all such restrictions in the end are sure to be broken down. There is no real freedom however till men do think for themselves, and for themselves judge what is right on all matters that pertain to their well-being and their destiny. The very pious and respectable Jews, to whom Christ spoke, are represented as having been made quite indignant by his implication that they needed any sort of enfranchisement. "We be Abraham's seed," they said, "and were never in bondage to any man." Nevertheless they were in bondage, though they did not know it. They were slaves to a tradition and a written law which was at least no adequate expression of a sense of right and justice and was, as Jesus pointed out to them, in some respects in flagrant opposition to the spirit of morality and religion.

They were under the lash of a public sentiment which scourged them unmercifully if they dared neglect any of the many foolish requirements which that law laid

upon them. There could not be a more complete or unmitigated tyranny than was that public opinion which visited, with pitiless ostracism, those who ventured to call in question any of the multitudinous provisions into which the so-called law of Moses had been worked out. These men were free only in the sense that they chose to submit to that tyranny. They made a virtue of necessity and embraced the chains by which they were bound. They refused to acknowledge themselves slaves so long as they had no desire to be free. But contented and willing slavery is not freedom, and Jesus told them the truth about themselves when he implied that they existed in a state of bondage.

We have exactly the same state of things to-day and the same plea is made by those who, whatever else they may be, are not free men and women. Why, they ask, should we be said to be less free than anybody else, so long as we knowingly and willingly and unreservedly submit ourselves to authority in matters of faith? It is our free act thus to give away our liberty; why therefore do we not continue to be free? According to this reasoning the slave who made no effort to escape from bondage thereby ceased to be a slave. It is a piece of sophistry very widely employed to bolster up the self-respect of people at the present time; and on the whole it is rather a contemptible plea. One can respect people who, for one reason or another, have come to distrust liberty; who say that it is only a limited amount of freedom that they want for themselves, or are willing to accord to other people. But not to dare to say openly what one really thinks, and then to profess to be at the same time in the enjoyment of perfect liberty is a somewhat pusillanimous performance.

And though we live in the midst of a greater degree of religious tolerance than has perhaps ever been seen on earth before, it still costs something to uphold the ideal of freedom in religious thought. He who professes a faith different from the reigning creeds of Christendom is still visited with a weight of social displeasure which, to say the least, it is not pleasant to bear. In most places something like a social boycott is instituted against those who dare to think for themselves in religion, and reach conclusions which do not accord with the general belief. It seems peculiarly mean when people who are guilty of using that unfair and oppressive weapon, the boycott, taunt those so-called heretics with their limited success in commanding their ideas to their fellow-men.

But why then is it worth while to uphold the idea of freedom against such heavy odds? What has liberty to show for itself that makes it a desirable condition for all that live? Suppose it to be true that knowledge of the truth does make one free; why should we think it is good for him to be emancipated whether or not he has come to the point of desiring it? These certainly are fair questions, and in our day they have come to be questions of immense significance. Because, for a period of some years, we have been obliged to witness a wide and growing reaction against the whole ideal of liberty. It is that reaction, in large measure, which has brought about the present strife of arms.

In the middle of the last century pretty much the whole Western world was in a ferment of desire for larger freedom. It almost seemed as if all hierarchies and autocracies were tottering to their fall. Revolution against established authorities was everywhere in the air and a

day of universal emancipation seemed about to dawn. And then the tide turned, as tides in human life are apt to do. It was discovered that any large amount of individual freedom did not make, immediately at least, for social efficiency. No free church, for example, could be expected to equip itself with anything like the organized power of the Church of Rome. No free state could develop or manage the machinery to do things as could the state more or less ruled by a monarchical sovereignty. Men and women in a democracy could not be welded and forged together into such a smooth working mechanism as was possible under aristocratic rule. Being "many men of many minds," pulling in diverse ways, all their social organizations were sure to be less comprehensive and less complete than when the will of a few could be enforced upon the whole social mass.

And so the ideal began to change. Not freedom but social efficiency became more and more the supreme aim. People became impatient with the relatively ineffective methods of democracy and began to admire more the mechanical skill and power of autocratic establishments. The extent of this change may be well enough measured perhaps by the growth of Episcopacy above that of Congregationalism, here in New England, which is almost the original home of the free church. That same change without doubt has been going on throughout the whole modern world; and but for knowledge of the ebb and flow, always alternating in currents of opinion, the believer in liberty might well despair. But the tide is going to change again. The ideal of freedom in time will regain more than its old ascendancy. The observer of past movements in the world's life might expect this as a natural reaction, and when one sees

upon what belief in liberty is based he can but be absolutely sure that at last the method of freedom must prevail. Because, when we think the matter out, that appears to be the method which God himself has deliberately chosen for the children of men; and despite the positivist's idea, that it is useless to think about the supreme government of the universe, it is precisely that religious belief which colors and shapes all our views of the conduct of life.

It used to be thought that everything which happened in this world of ours was by express command of the Almighty; that all the actions of men were decreed by Him, in advance, and that even evil deeds were ordained by Him in order that the "wrath of man might praise him!" It was then supposed that any other view destroyed the sovereignty of God. He could not be King over all unless all that was done on earth was an expression of His will. But the religious mind in Christian lands has now almost everywhere revolted from that thought. No such picture of the divine character as that would imply is given us in the words of Christ. We cannot have a Father in heaven on such terms as that older theology prescribes. Religious thought has grown wise enough to see that if God is all powerful He is great enough to hold off His hand of might, as well as to apply it to the regulation of the lives of men.

It is within His province not only to rule and govern the movements of the beings He has created but to ordain a sphere of freedom, within which they are left to decide their own path and to determine their own destiny; and religion is coming to see that this is the only way in which Divine Providence could provide for the creation of such personal existence as we are conscious

of possessing. A person cannot be a machine-made product. In so far as we are merely the creation of our social environment we have no true personality. Our real character is that which we have wrought out for ourselves. We may need and may have help, as a little child learning to walk may need a directing and sustaining hand; but the child does not learn to walk save by the exercise of its own strength. So the human soul, in the wisdom of God, has been given a degree of self-control in order that it may acquire that personal life which enables it to bear the image of its maker.

These are not my own private and random speculations about the meaning of our existence. Listen to the wise words of a teacher of theology, in one of our modern schools. "Our faith," he says, "has learned to judge that God withholds some of His omnipotence, in order that you and I might be free beings. Doubtless He might have thrust perfection on us. Doubtless He might have made us mechanically happy, as He made the rose lovely and water limpid. He might have thrust perfection on us, but He chooses that we should win it, achieve it, create it. He willed that you should be a person, not an automaton, not a passive product of His power. He willed that we should be persons, capacitated at last for personal communion; sensitive, grateful, loving, confiding spirits; and therefore He gave us freedom with all its perils. That is why you and I grope our way with many blunders in these devious paths of the world, though they all lead at last to the completeness of a personal being, freely, willingly, gladly conformed to the Holy One, in likeness to whom we were endowed."

These are the wise words of a learned and a far-seeing mind. They show us plainly enough what the best

religious thought of our day is coming to be; and they provide a perfect answer for that question why it is worth while for men to be free. It is only through freedom that they can accomplish the end for which they were created.

It is quite possible that, without liberty, they can have more of the good things of this present life; can be better fed and clothed, kept in a more secure peace, and be more effectively sheltered from temptation. That was one of the great arguments in favor of the institution of slavery; that the black race, on the whole, was better off, so far as every worldly comfort goes, than it would be in freedom. It was said, and no doubt said with truth, that to emancipate that race would plunge it into a harder struggle for existence; would put upon it burdens which it was ill prepared to bear, and would increase the social evils and disorders seated in its life. But the answer to this was that every race had been obliged to work its way through these evils and disorders by its own exertions, and so must the black race if ever it was to achieve true manhood and womanhood. No doubt it is true of all people that a benevolent despotism can make for them a smoother way than any they are likely to find in the near future for themselves. But the trouble is that we never can be sure how long despotisms will continue benevolent; and then there is the further consideration that despotisms are not favorable to the growth of character.

That is one of the anomalies of our system of dealing with crime. We shut up in prison the man who has proven too weak to resist temptation, and we there subject him to a discipline which, if anything, weakens his power of self-help; so that we send him back into society

rather less able than before to fight the battle of life in manful and honest fashion. And when a beginning is made toward applying the method of freedom to establish some reform in prison discipline tremendous interests are at once arrayed to stop off that experiment. It is perhaps not a bad illustration of the conflict which believers in liberty everywhere have to wage to secure consideration for their ideals.

No doubt there are classes of men, and kinds of human nature, which cannot safely be trusted with freedom. There are nations which would make utter wreck and ruin of their society if they attempted to manage it for themselves under democratic forms. It is not all a mistake that the world, hitherto, has been so much held in subjection to one and another kind of absolute government. Some friends of the negro have been wise enough to admit that it was a good thing for him to be brought to this new land in bondage and held here, for a succession of generations, in slavery. And the most bitter Protestant ought to realize that the steady drill and discipline of the Catholic Church for centuries wrought a great work in the life of Western Europe.

But there comes a time when such discipline ceases to be helpful; when its continuance is nothing more than a sentence of perpetual childishness and immaturity; and that unhappily is what the system which administers the discipline can never realize. It is like some parents who cannot see that their children have grown up and are entitled to think for themselves. Therefore emancipation has so often to be accomplished, not through peaceful evolution but by something like revolution. A fight has to be made for freedom; sometimes a fight which is a veritable life and death contest; always a

contest which will involve much bitterness and suffering. That struggle is likely to be made even upon mere instinct. Human nature, when it reaches a certain point, is sure to develop an impulse to be free. It may not know very well why it wants this boon, but it becomes like a young bird poised on the edge of its nest longing to try its wings in flight. Alas, that for want of knowledge of what freedom means this flight should so often end disastrously.

Two things are needful to make the experiment of liberty successful. First, the world needs a religion which shall consecrate the endeavor after freedom, and give to it a high and holy purpose. Room in this world merely to have one's own way is not a very blessed or satisfying gift. On the contrary, it often becomes wearisome and burdensome to the last degree, so that men are glad by almost any means to be rid of it. Probably no life is more arduous or more tiresome than that which, being tied down to no round of duty, must be spent in the constant hunt for amusement. Liberty in this sense is a most hollow boon. It is good for nothing save as an opportunity for the pursuit of knowledge or for the growth of character. To those aims it is indispensable if human life is to rise much above some primitive and rudimentary stage. None but a free mind can go far in the discovery of truth, and no race of slaves can ever develop a strong well-rounded character. Yet, though the only reasonable religious faith is one which asserts that the creator of men has designed them to fulfil their destiny through freedom, the preponderating mass of religious belief, thus far, contains scarcely the least hint that liberty has anything whatever to do with the divine purpose.

The idea of freedom as yet has played only a very subordinate part in systems of religious thought. We need very much such a reconstruction of Christian faith as shall bring out the meanings of that great idea and keep them ever before the mind. I do not know that we need predict actual disaster to our civil institutions from the presence here of forms of religion which will not allow that man, in his thought of God and a spiritual world, has any right to be free. I do say that our civil liberty can never grow into what it ought to be, so long as the great weight of popular religion stands squarely across its path. This free country of ours never can fulfil its proper destiny till we are able to accomplish a religious reform which will bring the sanction of the deepest faith of the soul to the support of that great experiment which, as a nation, we are trying out.

In the second place, we have to learn that freedom is useless to us if all we get out of it is that kind of individualism which leads men apart from each other, destroying the bonds of brotherhood and mutual helpfulness between them. Social organization and efficiency is the ultimate ideal. The spiritual man is essentially a social being and cannot grow to anything like full stature in solitude, or without cultivation of those sympathies which bind him to his fellow-men. There is much to admire in those systems of social organization which assign each man his place and utilize what each one has to give for a common good. We have much to learn from those religious and industrial structures of a common life which turn certain groups of men into a well-disciplined army, and with which it is impossible for any mere mob of human beings, however intelligent they may be, to compete. But the question is, Do we want such systems

of living to be imposed upon us from without, or to grow from within? Is it best to have them manufactured for us by a set of specialists, or that by our own wit and choice we should find our way to methods of co-operation that ally us together in the enlightened service of the community of which we make a part?

So far as outward results are concerned, it may not make so much difference in the end; save that experience bids us beware of trusting too much any set of specialists to use wisely the organizations they have planned and enforced. Our own time is giving one of the most impressive warnings of this ever uttered in the history of our race, and one that is likely to have profound effect on coming generations. But the inward results of the two methods are likely to be as wide apart as are the poles. From the authoritative system only lame and imperfect results can be secured by way of producing the higher kind of manhood. That, at all events, is the faith of the believer in liberty; that the best things in human life can be attained only through the method of freedom.

And this is not a blind faith, for a vast deal of experience can be alleged in its support; and it is the only reasonable interpretation of the longing and desire to be free so deeply planted in the heart of man. The more we are told that democracy does not work very well in practice, the more we must insist that there is a higher end toward which the impulse for freedom points. The deathless urge and push in that direction evermore surging up out of the heart of mankind, with a force that continually threatens the stability of empires and kingdoms, cannot be a mere destructive influence. It is the beginning of some new order in human affairs. It is

the prophecy of a new kind of human society; of the only kind of society which can be conceived of as existing in heaven, or as making a kingdom of heaven on earth; that, namely, in which men walk freely by an inward light of the spirit, and under that guidance are led to brotherly relations with each other as children of the same Father in heaven.

But they who embrace this gospel of freedom, and cherish as one of life's greatest gifts that liberty wherewith as they conceive Christ has made them free, have need of unending patience and enduring faith. They must wait and not despair, while humanity is learning its slow hard lesson. They must not be dismayed when many who once saw the vision proclaim it nothing but a foolish dream, and turn back to find rest in some form of comfortable bondage. They must be able to bear the spectacle of nations "stumbling and falling in disastrous night," as they try to press forward toward the dawning of this new day. They must not lose heart or courage when follies, or even crimes, are committed in the sacred name of liberty. Hardest of all perhaps, they must be able to suffer themselves the reproach of a great deal which tends justly to bring freedom into contempt. Professing themselves to be, or to desire to be, free they will be classed by the world with many a wild extremist whose judgment is not much better than a mere delirium of excited fancies. A man like Paul could suffer this hardship; why cannot you or I submit to it, without surrendering the faith that is in us?

If nothing very much matters in this life of ours save to get through it on the easiest possible terms, then it is senseless to toil and suffer for any great cause. But if there are issues before us, big with the weal or woe of

comfort and cheer. It is sad, but only as great tragedy is sad, where, at the cost of huge pain, a sublime moral principle is vindicated or, through catastrophe, some heroic victory is won. Between that sadness and the sentimental gloom of would-be poets, who can only chant "vanity of vanities," and who get their emotional thrill from assuming that life goes on without plan or purpose, there is a difference wide as the poles. A poem which begins, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place," and which ends with the prayer that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us, ought not to be, for an instant, confused with another sort of poetry, which, however beautiful it may be, is sickly and smells of narcotic drugs.

Here, in great Hebrew Psalms and prophecies, the stern and solemn facts of existence are fully recognized, and there is no invitation to drown remembrance of them in a bowl of wine. But over these facts of swift destruction and decay is set an eternal rule of justice and righteousness; and, at the very moment when all flesh is seen to wither like grass, it is also remembered that the word of our God shall stand forever. Let us not think, then, that these words, "We spend our years as a tale that is told," in such a setting, have the meaning that we should ascribe to them, if they came, for example, from a certain famous Persian poet. If the phrase stood alone, it might have that sound, as of something idle and useless; but, when we catch the spirit out of which it comes, we see that we must find for it another meaning.

In many Eastern lands the story-teller is a kind of public functionary, as well known as the priest or the tax-collector. Certain men, with a stock of stories at command and having a gift for picturesque declamation, wander from place to place, having no other occupation

but that of reciting these tales. And, wherever they go, groups of people surround them, listening to what they have to tell with breathless interest. Such a custom as this is quite likely to have come down from immemorial times, and one is disposed to think that the picture of it was what the Psalmist had in mind.

See the story-teller, as he stands surrounded by a circle of eager faces and shining eyes! His own form given up to the impersonation of some thrilling episode; all the minds of those who listen to him absorbed in his narrative, and tense with the emotion which his words produce! What is the meaning of an illustration like that, applied to our human experience as a whole? Why, above all, that life is an affair of intense dramatic interest, a movement of forces which holds us spellbound while we watch it or take part in it, a succession of situations leading to some end which we wait for with keenest expectation.

To be sure, one may play the part of an outsider who knows nothing of what the story is about, and who, seeing one of these groups which has deserted every other occupation to listen to an imaginary tale, exclaims upon what seems to him a futile waste of time. These people, he would say, might better be engaged in useful work, which would bring them more bread to eat. To which criticism the answer would be: Why should they have bread or eat bread, unless life itself be good to their taste? And here, at least, while they listen to the story-teller's recitals, life does become to them profoundly interesting. The comment of the outsider is rather pointless, because, on the ground which he chooses to take, it is difficult to make out that anything is well worth while, in which case it would seem to be the part

of wisdom to amuse one's self with whatever pleasing fictions one can find. But the saying which we have taken for a text was not spoken from the outsider's point of view. Its author was in the stream of life, musing upon its character; not on the banks, watching it flow by. And one of its features which appealed to him most strongly, beside its brevity as the single man might know it, was the tremendous interest of it for any normal mind. "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

We might take a parallel illustration from our present world, and say life is like a great game, where each one is, by turns, both spectator and player. Now we are ourselves striving, with all our heart and soul, to win the next move in this play, and then we are looking on, with wide-eyed speculation or anxiety, to see how the other players will perform their part. And, if in ancient days life had this kind of dramatic interest, how much more should we find it a thrilling spectacle to-day! In old times one's immediate sight of it was limited to his own city or neighborhood. There situations of acute interest were sometimes developed, though between whiles the current of affairs must have gone on in rather prosaic fashion. Now we have the whole world constantly in view. Our Hippodrome has suddenly become an affair of many rings, and out of all the events that are ceaselessly transpiring we are never at loss for one that will closely hold even the wandering gaze. Somewhere, at every moment, history is in the making, so fast and with so many surprises that we can watch it, and try to forecast its unfolding, as men hang upon the turns of an exciting play.

Even without this wide range of selection and this extended view, most people, one is disposed to think, find the happenings that come to them full enough of

dramatic meanings. The best regulated of households is apt to have its tragic moments. The seat of the complication in its affairs may be only the nursery or the kitchen; but quite likely passion will mount high, and tears will flow, and the situation, while it lasts, will be sufficiently intense, for those who are involved in it, to absorb their whole being.

I think we may take it for granted that life, so far as we are really in it, wears for us all this dramatic aspect. We spend our years as a tale that is being told, moment by moment and hour by hour; and it is a tale with whose development our hearts are deeply and vitally engaged. One may partially get out of it or be thrown out of it; and then, as he surveys it, some very curious reflections may occur to him. But it is questionable whether this detached position gives him any advantage in judging it. To recur to the story-teller and his group, it is plain that the casual tourist who may indulge in scornful remarks about the idle Moors, or Arabs, thus passing away their time, knows little about the case on which he is so ready to pass judgment. He does not understand the language and cannot tell what the tale is to which these people are listening. He has no real entrance into their life, and has small right to judge how they ought to pass their time. It is more than possible that this difficulty of estimating life aright, as an outside observer, has been one great defect of our philosophy hitherto. Certainly, it is the weakness of many plans that are formed for the world's improvement. Reformers fail because they do not know the situation with which they are dealing from the inside. They judge the case, and fit remedies to it, without understanding accurately what it is. The ideal philosophy and the ideal

reform spring from that inside realm where men are having the real experience and grappling with the real problems that life brings to us. Assuredly, no philosophy is likely to do us much good or acquire a very firm footing, save as it interprets to us our own experience in terms that give it meaning and coherence to our minds.

Now, when we ask what it means, in thought, that life is, in our experience, like a drama or a tale, it will be found that this involves what is essentially a religious interpretation of it. All our lives, while we are living, naturally, the life into which circumstances have plunged us, we are taking for granted those great truths which are fundamental to religion, and, one may say, practically all the truths which are really vital to religious faith. Thus, first of all, this feeling of dramatic interest implies the freedom of the human actors in these scenes. Life is something other than a puppet show carried on by machinery. We may take some mild pleasure in the behavior of a set of marionettes, when the mechanism by which they are moved is deftly concealed; but it is only because this is an imitation of real life, and in real life itself there can be no dramatic situation unless the issue is uncertain. It is the suspense of that uncertainty that largely constitutes the interest.

If the gambler shall come to believe that he is playing with loaded dice, his interest in the game immediately ceases. The fascination of it depends upon the open chance which it involves, and not merely upon his inability to guess what its next turn may be. If we believed human life to be altogether governed, like the weather, by immutable laws, we should simply resign ourselves, as we do about sunshine and storm, to take what comes. That, in fact, is about the way the Turk looks upon

existence. Everything is fated, and therefore he does not in the least excite himself to anticipate what is coming to pass. Our sense of something dramatic implies a feeling that the issue is uncertain, because men are free, and no one, not even divine omniscience, can tell with accuracy what a free agent will do. The way in which we take life shows this implicit belief of our hearts, however we speculate with our heads, that the human spirit acts in a freedom which is never entirely overborne by outside constraint.

And that is a religious belief, because the greatness and worth of the human soul are at stake upon it. Give to man this freedom, and he at once becomes so different from the world of things surrounding him that his life is seen to belong to a different sphere. He is not, and cannot be, a mere product of nature, if we are right in our feeling that human existence is like a drama, and that we spend our years as a tale that is told.

Again, we are all the time taking it for granted that in this game of life we encounter intelligence on every side,—not merely in other men, but in the powers above humanity. There is nothing very dramatic in what Saint Paul called “kicking against the pricks” or in beating one’s head against stone walls. Life is interesting to us because it involves a keen encounter of opposing wits; and, if one watches himself or observes the talk of other people, he may be surprised to find how much it is our common habit, as it was of the primitive savage, to think of things about us as if they were alive. Do we not speak of the “total depravity of inanimate things”? and is there not in our hearts a very real feeling which answers to that phrase?

Now one may say that this manner of speaking is like

our talk of sunrise and sunset, which implies the outgrown idea of a flat and stationary earth. Yes; but in either case the misinterpretation of observed phenomena does not abolish the perception of a very real fact. The sun is real, and his apparent motion is real, though we have learned to account for it in a different way. We now know, as the savage did not know, that wood and stone are not alive. But the consideration that made him think them alive is just as apparent to our inner consciousness as it was to him. We, too, have the same feeling that the world about us is, as it were, filled and saturated with intelligence. We show it in the way we take life day by day. We cannot feel that it is a mere wandering in the wilderness. If we did, we should simply become disgusted with it, as the Israelites of old did, whenever they fell into a faithless mood. It was to them an heroic adventure, in so far as they remembered the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. The presence of God in their affairs was the mainstay of their courage and their hope. And we, too, if we take counsel of our inmost hearts, shall find that they are all the time depending upon the wisdom and power not our own that "make for righteousness." This also goes with our dramatic interpretation of existence. Not only human will and human ingenuity are here at work, but there is a divine power running through the scene, vindicating its laws and guiding events toward its far-off end. This is what makes life interesting, where otherwise it soon falls into a kind of hopeless muddle.

And above all, therefore, we are continually taking for granted that far-off end! What is a drama good for without its moral and its issue in some definite, complete result? To be sure, the quite modern mind seems in-

clined to try to give us a drama which shall be a picture of what it takes life to be, an affair without unity or order or end; a succession of pictures with about as much moral and intellectual meaning in their order as belongs to a Kaleidoscope. I wish I felt as sure of some other issues as I do that human nature will ultimately spew that kind of artistic production out of its mouth as an utterly tasteless and unprofitable thing. Man must change his nature and abjure his birthright before he will content himself with that miserable substitute for the romanticism of the past. We find life interesting just because we know, in our wiser hearts, whatever again our foolish heads may say, that this undramatic drama is anything but a true picture of it. Life has movement toward an end. Somewhere and somehow it is to reach a goal.

All this swift and intense action tends toward a result in which the scattered threads of the plot are to be gathered up and by which the whole series of situations is to be given an explanation. Things will work themselves out, at last, to conclusions that justify or condemn positions we have taken and courses of conduct that we have chosen to adopt. Our life is made subject to constant change, but out of it things are all the time being gathered and garnered which do not pass away. That is our invincible feeling about it, apart from which all deep interest in it ceases to exist. Whether or not we may ascribe to the divine mind a "plan" of existence, such as we form and use in our constructions, we must insist that life, as a whole, knows the road it is travelling and has an end in view. There is no drama of life without that.

Nothing more wearies me than the assumption, on the part of the man who thinks that for him death is the

final end, of a superior courage in holding that view, and his charge that belief in a life to come is a form of cowardice. If that were true, then suicide, instead of being an act of madness, would become a supreme instance of heroism. "Cowardly," forsooth, to think that this life merges in a greater life beyond! Is it nothing to have and preserve a world other than one which idiots might dream,—a world in which there is something worth doing beyond taking one's fill of the pleasures of sense, a world where intellect can find for itself a nobler use than to discover that all things, including itself, are absolutely useless?

The courage of disbelief! The complacency of a mind which makes that its virtue is, on the whole, the cheapest kind of spiritual pride I know. I would urge no man to try to go where reason does not show him a probable way; and it is not only his privilege, but his solemn duty, to walk by such convictions as he finds planted in his heart. But what shall we say when the color-blind take to vaunting their defect, and declare that they have rather a better right than any one else to run railway trains? If one does not see in life those values which great minds in the past have declared it to possess,—and which, spite of logic itself, our hearts will still believe it to possess,—I will dwell with him in perfect charity, till he commits what I take to be the sin against the Holy Ghost,—that of denying to goodness its essential quality. Faith is nothing, if not courageous; and, when that is called cowardice, it is exactly as if what the world names red should be pronounced green.

I have here tried to justify the fitness of the ancient saying, "We spend our years as a tale that is told," by showing that we do, in fact, take our lives in that kind of

way, and that this fact, when we look at it, carries certain religious implications of great significance. If life be what our natural feeling assumes it to be, then are we free—as only the children of God can be free; then God is with us in all our ways, and then is there a prize set before us, such as infinite wisdom and beneficence might fitly offer.

Dare we trust our own hearts enough to believe these things? If not, whom or what shall we trust? For myself, I think I can say that, if I know not these things, then I know nothing; least of all do I know that their contrary is true. "Say not," once wrote the great apostle, "who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down or who shall descend into the deep, to bring him up from the dead. For the word is very nigh thee; is already in thy mouth and thy heart." If we look there, upon the tables of our consciousness, we may find written essentially all that Moses brought down from his sacred mount, on tables of stone, all that the Son of God himself declared to men, as the Law of the Highest. And what is thus written in living characters, what is thus proclaimed by life itself, through all its oracles, is assuredly God's truth. We have a right to spend our years as a tale that is told. It is a divine story that is being enacted in our hearts and lives; and, like a story, it is only complete when it ends in happiness and blessing.

THE DIVINE GENTLENESS.

Thy gentleness hath made me great.—PSALM xviii. 35.

Perhaps we do not assume too much in saying that the Psalm from which this is taken is really one of David's Psalms. His name was given by tradition to a collection of poems many, perhaps most of which were written after his day. But this is written elsewhere in the Hebrew scriptures, among the chronicles of David's reign; and it is a real pleasure to think of the beautiful saying, "Thy gentleness hath made me great," as coming from that poet-king, who is the most romantic figure in Israel's ancient history. All things considered, it is very remarkable that he should have thought of that Jehovah, whom most of his countrymen saw through the thunders of Sinai, and who was to them the "God of battles," as a gentle being. It is worth thinking about how he came to entertain such an idea, and what right he had to hold it. One may say that it is not the idea which the great majority of human beings have found most natural to their thought.

On the island of Marken, in Holland, they have a superstition which is strong enough to rule their action, though they are sufficiently ashamed of it to try to hide it from the eyes of the world. So at all events we are informed by one who has lived on the island more intimately than most foreigners who visit its shores. They

will not bury a body cast up by the sea, if they have reason to believe that it is the body of a sailor. They have a curious sign for determining that question, which it is here not needful to relate. But it is their belief that the storm in which a sailor perished will not abate if the sea is robbed of its prey. To placate the angry waters which have cast their victim ashore, the body is given back to the storm and sent adrift once more upon the tossing waves. This seems a kind of heathenish act, and the people of Marken evidently recognize the fact that it is contrary to the dictates of the Christianity which they profess. But their pagan instincts in this are stronger than their Christian faith.

I wonder if it is not a good deal true of all of us that down at the bottom of our minds there are fears and disbeliefs which no amount of Christian culture has been able wholly to suppress. Ages of living as in the presence of a terrible deity have left this mark upon our minds, and the faith we are trying to learn from Christ cannot yet reach down to obliterate these features of our deeper consciousness. Especially they who are in much contact with the sterner side of Nature round about them are apt to have this instinctive fear of Nature's God continually renewed and replenished in their minds. Nature to be sure has two sides. We are drawn to her, in many ways, by bonds of great intimacy and tenderness. Nothing could be more lovely than her quiescent and benignant moods. The beauty of her waters, her hills, and her plains has a never-failing charm. Man, with all his works and ways, often seems an impudent intruder into her domain, and we long to get away from him to the unpeopled forest, or the pathless retreats of great mountains.

And yet Nature in her most friendly aspect maintains a certain attitude of aloofness and indifference towards us that does not seem to invite a perfect trust. How grateful is the warm sun of spring, as one walks among opening buds and springing flowers! But it is a warmth not specially meant for us, or indeed for any creature. The sun just shines; and it is all one to that great luminary whether its beams fall gently on a benumbed and lately frozen earth, or beat with cruel force on the scorched and shrivelled vegetation of a tropic plain. Even when we feel strongly that Nature is our bountiful mother, we have a sense that her gifts are showered in no particular love for us. It used to be argued that the earth had been specially prepared for man's coming; and still, I think, there is more force in those arguments than the general feeling of the learned world will now allow. But however we may be impressed with the thought that a power behind Nature has shaped the world for our benefit, I am sure that from Nature itself we can only gain the impression of much indifference to our desires and designs. We can force her to grow the grains and flowers that suit our purpose. But she never really adopts them as her own. At best she will be but a reluctant step-mother to them, and much prefers her own wild progeny that is often quite useless in our eyes.

Much more in her turbulent moods she shows not the slightest care or interest for our presence here. There is a relentlessness about her winds and storms which can but affect us with awe and fear. Men who "go down to the sea in ships" stand in no small dread of that watery plain which they so often traverse. No sailor ever thinks much of what is quite apt to loom large in a landsman's imagination, that is the grandeur of a storm

at sea. He has wrestled with it too many times to feel any uplift of heart when he sees its approach. The ocean is very wonderful, a certain distant acquaintance being maintained. But what with its enveloping fogs, its treacherous currents, its hidden reefs, as well as its overwhelming tempests, they who live upon it day by day when it is not in holiday mood, do not love it overmuch.

Now all the earlier religions of the world were no doubt strongly tinged with nature-worship; and of that worship the fearsome side was quite sure to get the upper hand. There is a certain note of apprehensiveness in the common mind to-day, with regard to the action of the powers which have our life in charge, that very probably is to be thus accounted for. The Deity most powerfully brought home to the heart for ages was the God of earthquake and tempest. The God of terrible might and terrible doings is set before us, over and over, in the older Hebrew scriptures. We are the children of many generations which have feared the Lord in that rather awful way. Sometimes the mere hint of his presence has been regarded as the sign of fatal disaster.

It is quite natural that we have not yet, and cannot altogether outgrow the influence which this has left upon us. We are of fearful heart. We dare not believe altogether in the best, the ideal good. The darker thing seems to us, often, rather the more likely to be true; and however clear a case in reason we may hold up to confront our apprehensions, that does not entirely prevent the sinking of spirits with which we look forward to the issue before us. So strong and so deep-seated is all this in our common human nature, that it makes a most effective background against which to see such a sentence

as we have taken for a text: "Thy gentleness hath made me great." It is only the gentleness of the Lord that can make men great. The power of the Almighty, when that is felt above everything else, makes humanity infinitely small and mean. "I am a mere worm of the dust," exclaims the heart, when it feels how helpless it is in the grasp of the vast forces of a boundless universe. They who worship mainly a God of power come very easily to have great contempt for humankind; and perhaps the revival of the idea of power as the most Godlike thing we know, which revival has been quite marked these later years, has had much to do with that sense of the cheapness of human life which now permits so many atrocious deeds to be done.

When we contrast our physical being with the limitless might of the powers of nature, we are small and mean and contemptible. It is only as we come to measure ourselves on a very different scale that we can see humanity as something to be reverenced and admired. This is one of the profound meanings of the Psalmist's saying, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." When we come to conceive of the supreme authority of the Universe as one of love and kindness and good-will; as a strong hand put forth not to frighten and overawe, but to seek and save the lost,—under such a rule as that we can lift up our heads. We are worth something in a world so governed, and to a king of the world of such character. With these conceptions of Deity our small physical stature ceases to oppress the imagination, and our greatness of heart begins to count. We, too, in this way are great, as God is great; if he is gentle, we also have that same nature in us, and can be perfect as he is perfect. An altogether hopeless disparity, as between the infinite

force of gravitation and the sands of the seashore, is gone when we think of the divine mind as being characterized chiefly by a patient, redeeming love.

"When I consider the stars, the sun and moon," said another Hebrew poet, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" On this physical scale we are too insignificant to deserve notice. But take another point of view and we have been made "Only a little lower than the angels," being crowned "with glory and honor." That point of view is expressed in this saying, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." A Deity who is not merely the God of storms and battles, but a being full of lovingkindness and tender mercy, gives us this new thought of ourselves that there is something in us by reason of which we can stand before the wonders of the outward world saying, "after all we are of more worth than these."

Now, against the prevailing tendency of the human mind to see God through the more terrifying aspects of external nature, and to make them the symbol of Deity, there has always been another disposition to assert this other view. Scattered through the Hebrew scriptures are many utterances which could be set side by side with that which we have taken for a text; sayings which probably but little reflect the popular religious attitude, but which show that the finer spirits of that remarkable race worshipped a Deity of which the popular heart had little conception or idea.

Where, we may ask, did these finer spirits get their thought of God? We have indicated plainly enough, I think, where the common mind found its warrant for the terror that it felt before the divine presence. It was in the dreadful side of Nature's happenings. He who was responsible for such terrible things must be himself, men

thought, a terrible being. Where did this other thought of divine gentleness come from? It came from looking into the deeps of being through the higher nature of man. That wonderful Psalm, beginning "The Lord is my Shepherd," shows this genesis unmistakably. As the nature worshipper, beholding the awful grandeur and gloom of the thunder-storm, said, "God must be like that"; so the poet, looking upon the shepherd's tender care for his flock, said, "This is the true image and superscription of God in his works. He who has made all things must be like that."

And was he not right? Is it mere foolish self-assertion when the human spirit, taking itself at its holiest and best, declares that its own higher qualities furnish the best evidence of what the mind of God must be? On the contrary, back of this faith there is some of the clearest and most unquestioned knowledge we possess; that sense of values, which assures us where, in a world of created things, the thought of God has been made most complete.

It requires tons and tons of rock, which, for the most part, we account only waste material, to yield one tiny fraction of an ounce of the new substance called radium. As we contrast this small bit of radium with our thought of the huge ledge that was ground up to produce it, is there the least doubt in our minds as to which has the greater worth? It is not merely that we happen to fancy the radium more. It is by far the more valuable thing. It has revealed to us secrets of being that were not dreamed of before. It has a value in science and in art, that is worth all its cost; a value that is not alone our arbitrary estimate, but is inherent in the very quality of its being. So, although there is but little of our

humanity when compared with the vast bulk of the physical world out of which it has come,—yet, looking upon these two we can say, without an instant's hesitation, here in man, take him at his highest and best is a worth to outweigh all that is beside, though solar systems without end were thrown into the scale.

We do not merely imagine that this human spirit, with its loves and hopes, its achievements and aspirations, its heroism and self-sacrifice, its profound insights and higher desires, is a nobler creation than the great sun in the heavens. We know that with all its vast bulk that huge "orb of day" is far less a triumph of creative skill, far less a wonderful and mysterious thing, than is the life we carry in our own hearts. We know this if we know anything. We have a right to say that if an author is to be known through his works, and reveals himself most perfectly in his greatest accomplishments, then the human spirit is the best and truest symbol of Deity. We are being tyrannized over by mere size when we say that the doings of Nature shall tell us chiefly what God is. There is far more reason in the poetic feeling which says the Lord is a shepherd to his people on the earth, and not one of them shall be lost on the bleak mountains but it shall be his delight to save that wanderer from the fold. He is a gentle not a terrible being, if the testimony of the heart is to be taken, and it will yet be taken by all that live as the only authentic oracle of Deity.

To be sure, reason has still to deal with the question how a Deity, such as the heart conceives, can be responsible for what seems to us the dark and terrible side of existence. That, however, is a less perplexing problem than we are apt to think it; and here it is deliberately put

one side to take one more step in the direct line of reflections with which we are engaged. It is true also that a critic might object to the view thus far presented as being dangerously like reasoning in a circle. God is good because humanity reveals him thus on its spiritual side; and man is great because the gentleness of the Lord lifts him up to an exalted spiritual height. Concerning this objection I am content to say that the two ideas have every right thus to strengthen and support each other. They spring from the same root: from a perception that the higher life in us is the greatest thing that the known universe holds. If we say that this, and not the lesser and lower creation, shall disclose to us what God is like, then all the new greatness that we can feel as children of that gentle Deity, belongs to us of right; and we may take the blessed fruit of a reverence for man which this yields, with no fear that it is illegitimately obtained.

And now, for a moment, let us think of the place which Christianity holds in the unfolding of this larger and better thought of God in the mind of our race. For many centuries Christendom has worshipped God under the likeness of a man. Practically the only Deity it has known has been one who has dwelt on the earth in human form, and taken back with him into the skies from which he came all the human love and gentleness manifested during his career among men. Surely when we consider the constant tendency of all religion to relapse into some kind of nature worship, and the certainty of Nature's more terrible aspect to acquire the mastery of such religion, this enthronement of a God-man over the heart of the Western world is about the most striking fact in all religious history.

Here at last is the human heart getting away from the gloomy terror which has so long darkened for it the very light of life, and acquiring confidence to live as under a reign of goodness and love. Here is the common mind growing up to the thought that God really is the shepherd of souls, and that the throne of the universe is held by a gentleness which makes men great. The worship of Christ as God seems to me a stage or step in the unfolding of man's deeper consciousness, which is of immeasurable significance. It has been in a way the assertion of the human spirit that it had a right to see the mind of Deity in and through the likeness of itself. It has accomplished the deliberate turning away from a material creation, as the best symbol of divinity, to look into the deeps of infinite spirit through that which alone within our ken is spirit; that is to say, through the heart and soul of man.

This must be an enormous step upward in the spiritual development of our race. This Christian faith has been accomplishing deliverance from an age-long terror of the Almighty which had laid such weights upon the mind of man that it could not rise far out of the dust; and there is not a word to be said against it, save that in its present form it seems not likely to complete the process it has begun.

For always behind its gracious and loving Man-Deity, once nailed to the cross for human redemption, has lurked that other shadowy figure the God which paganism knew: he who took awful vengeance upon men for their sins, and needed to be placated by the pity and self-sacrifice of a man. Christianity never yet could quite substitute its truer thought of God for that which held possession of the world's mind when its work began. It could only push

that somewhat into the background, and supplement it by seating its new God-man at the right hand of the throne of the Almighty. Down through Christian history comes, curiously mixed and intermingled, a hopeful and uplifting trust in the divine Saviour of the world and the old depressing terror of the Almighty; as if, but for the mediation of Christ, no mercy or forgiveness could be anywhere obtained.

Worship of Christ has to large extent pushed the thought of God the Father into the background. Yet whenever, as in older forms of Protestantism, that idea was brought forward into the foreground of common belief it has appeared in its old repellent form. The Christ of Calvinism was truly divine, but its image of God the Father was almost the image of a fiend. The moral nature attributed to him it would shock us to behold in any man. And still in current Christian belief this implication lurks. The spiritual philosophy of Christendom, when set forth in its true colors, still attributes to God an implacable and vindictive character which destroys the heart's faith and trust in him.

Well might a celebrated minister of an earlier generation exclaim, as he did, "Jesus Christ is the only God I know." He has been the only God worth knowing, so far as the great body of Christian thought has yet discovered. It is an immense and incalculable gain over what went before that thus the Christian world should bow its heart before the gentleness of Christ. But surely it is plain enough to one who is familiar with the teachings of Jesus, and who has sufficient imagination to grasp a great historic progress running through many ages of human life, what next step must be taken to complete the beginning that has been made. It remains

to transfer to the world's thought of God the Father Almighty, all those gentle and benignant attributes which have centred in the person of Christ.

To understand the horror with which Unitarianism is viewed, throughout a large part of the Christian world, we must remember that when that world is deprived of the belief that Jesus was God, it has practically nothing left that is fit for a sensitive and enlightened heart to worship. And the world can never in the least understand us, till it begins to see what a tragic kind of Atheism it must seem to the modern mind, when the God behind Christ is depicted as a being whom it is impossible for the human spirit to love and trust. With the training which the Christian world has received it should be easy now, once a certain amount of prejudice is dissipated, to teach it to look, not merely to or at Christ as the supreme divine image, but to look through him to a Deity who is like him in love and gentleness and willingness to forgive.

And the world cannot be truly Christian till it has thus learned Christ's thought of God. Nothing could have been further from his purpose; nothing could have seemed a worse defeat for his design, than that men should creep under his shadow as a kind of refuge from the wrath of God. For his whole effort was to take them by the hand and lead them to a Father in heaven before whose kindly presence they might put away their fear, even though they were the vilest of sinners in his sight; being quickened into new life by the touch of his forgiving love.

There cannot be one instant's doubt as to his portraiture of the character of Deity. It was that of a love which cared nothing whatever for the mere vindication of

its laws, or to pay back any evil that had been done; but cared only for the highest good of the souls of men; a love that would adopt any means, gentle or stern, as they promised to uplift these souls out of the dust from which they knew not how to rise. And there ought not to be much question as to what this thought of God would do for the world if it could be adopted. For the trouble with humanity is not so much the strength of its evil passions, as its weak distrust of the good, its lack of faith. It was the empty tenement, you remember, into which the seven devils found such ready entrance, in the parable.

If once human thought could be filled with a sense of the clear sovereignty of goodness and love, low ambitions and desires could get no such control of it as we often see, and therefore Christ's mission to teach men of the love of God is the greatest ever undertaken; the work most worthy to be carried on to final completion. If now we could banish from Christian belief the haunting spectre of a hard pagan Deity, which still lingers there, and could put in its place that picture of a Father in heaven which filled the whole soul of Christ, that would be the fulfilment of his mission to the hearts of men; and under the influence of such divine gentleness enthroned above it, the human soul everywhere would become truly great.

SAVING THE LOST.

The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.—MATT. xviii. 11.

Among all the titles given to Jesus by his loyal and devoted followers none is sweeter to the ear of those who have been reared under the older Christian traditions than that of Savior. Savior of mankind, and Savior of the world, he has been called; and whatever the best intelligence of our day may now make of that name, the heart of Christian believers will be slow to let it go. In common speech, of course, the name has been connected with the atonement which Christ was supposed to have made for the world's sin. He saved men, it has been believed, because, after they had all been condemned to hopeless and everlasting woe for their wickedness, he offered himself as a sacrifice in payment for the penalty which they had incurred. By his suffering and death he satisfied the judgment of the Almighty, and thus permitted the guilty to go free.

It is rather difficult to realize that this preposterous belief has been so long and so solemnly held by the great Christian world. It seems astounding that even yet huge ecclesiastical organizations should be founded on this childish idea of the nature of God, and the character of his dealings with men. That Deity should be pictured as willing to see the whole human race suffer eternally is sufficiently amazing; that when he had passed such sen-

tence upon mankind he should be represented as having been diverted from his purpose by one single tragic death, is still more inexplicable to one's common sense.

People who are in a state of strong reaction against such antiquated doctrines are apt to think that the saviorhood of Christ can refer to nothing else save this supposed release from an imaginary divine curse; and they are wont to tell us that we are guilty of flagrant sin against enlightened reason if we still speak of Jesus as a Savior of men. But the force of that accusation depends, I think, upon the weight of new meaning which we find to put into the old word. If there is no new thought significant enough to bear comparison with the meaning of the phrase as heretofore used it would be better not to try to dress up the name "Savior" in what must seem like a pale imitation or faded remnant of its former splendor. If, however, it can be made to appear that Jesus is the Savior of men in some much higher and nobler sense than the theology of the past has dreamed of, why should not one say to the Christian world that the traditional title for its Lord and Master is far more fit and true than it has itself known all these years? Why in that case should we not keep the old word till the common thought can be taught to behold in it reaches of truth to which it has hitherto been blind?

Let us, if we can, drop out of our remembrance all that circle of ideas about an angry Deity, a divine justice which may not be appeased till it has seen the satisfaction of its bond, and a divine being who took the form of a man in order to cancel that indebtedness by a death of shame. None of these ideas can be rightly found in the words of Christ, and they are actually abhorrent to the spirit of his teaching. Let us think only of what he

himself said by way of defining his mission and proclaiming his intent. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost."

Now I call Jesus "Savior" because I judge that in no other single phrase did he declare more plainly or more exactly what he aimed to do. I am come to save that which was lost. This, I think, was no accidental or incidental part of his purpose, but might be called his whole design. Either he did accomplish that result (or put the world in the way of its gradual accomplishment), or he utterly failed in his attempt. He was nothing, and he is nothing, of consequence to mankind if he did not or cannot save. We may profess belief in the "Leadership of Jesus," but that has to be a leadership which carries the idea of salvation, if we have in anywise fathomed his purpose or if we wish to offer the world anything worth its serious attention.

We might begin some brief exposition of this idea of saving the lost by referring to what has taken place in our modern industry. Many a great manufacturing interest has been built up simply by learning how to save and utilize the waste. Where competition is open and legitimate, again and again that has been the deciding factor on which success has turned. To very large extent industrial progress has been a process of stopping up leaks and turning by-products to account, and cutting off loss in labor or material. With all our talk about special privilege (and of that undoubtedly there is either far too much, or else it is too much abused), modern industry has chiefly grown great through the persistent ingenuity of men who have undertaken to save that which was lost.

I would not seem to defend or excuse any unjust method practised by what was long regarded as the greatest of all "trusts," but no one should forget its constant study to achieve new economies in the handling of its product, whereby what it had to offer was much reduced in price to all consumers. It is at least an open question whether this alone might not have carried it to every success it was desirable to achieve; and whether its use of the club to subdue competition was ever vital to its prosperity. At all events it is certain that had it not called into its service men with a rare faculty for devising means to save what was before lost, its brow-beating tactics never would have been tolerated for a single year. It lived and grew strong chiefly on the certainty that it could save, for society at large, a great deal of what it formerly cost to supply heat and light and motive power. That, I take it, is the story that runs all through the growth of modern industries. What we have gained over the world which our fathers knew is the knowledge how to bring to our service things and forces of which they made no use.

And, as we look forward into the future, the big problem, so far as our outward prosperity is concerned, is this same problem of saving what is now lost. Many suppose that everybody would be well-to-do and happy if what we have could be more evenly divided. But the fact appears to be that an equal division would secure only a very trifling enrichment of the common lot. It would be far more to the purpose if we knew how to stop up those gates by which so much of the resources of the world are now running all to waste. To speak of nothing else, if we could save annually the enormous sums now spent for drink and for the enginery of war,

what huge additions we could make to our means of common comfort, and what much larger reward could be secured for common toil. He who in these days will come to save that which is lost will render an incalculable service to his kind; so true it is that prevention of waste is the very key to those economic questions which we are trying to solve.

Much more when we take up the great human problem itself,—the problem of producing a race of men and women morally and spiritually fit to enter into the heritage which we believe God has prepared for them; the whole endeavor turns upon the question what to do with the human refuse which hangs like a clog and weight upon the working of the great social machine. Because, so far as the coming of any ideal social state is concerned, it will prove all in vain to raise up individuals or small classes of people who are ready for the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. It is the great lump of humanity at large which has somehow to be leavened and quickened with a new life; and, until that can be effected, we have literally nothing but a dying and a perishing world. Believe what you please about the quality of average human nature, the fact remains that every civilization since history began has tended to accumulate, more and more, on its lower levels, a great sodden mass of the mere dregs of humanity; and when in any case this grew too big that civilization was simply swamped.

We, here, in our new land, it is plain enough, have begun to acquire this same undesirable and threatening deposit, and the question of our future, too, will be determined by our wisdom, or lack of wisdom, in knowing what to do with it. Nature underneath man has prospered through the unrestricted play of many de-

structive agencies. All her unfit and noisome elements she puts swiftly out of existence. She can afford to produce by the million forms which are unable to hold their own in the struggle for subsistence, for she turns them into food for creatures which are stronger than they.

Of late years there has spread abroad, quite widely, a fatuous sort of faith that the same process of elimination could be depended upon to carry forward human civilization also from a lower to a higher stage; that with men, as with animals and plants, the weak and incompetent in the natural course of things must tend to disappear, leaving the world to be peopled by its better and stronger elements. Now no faith was ever preached that was more purely theoretical and doctrinaire or more contemptuous of the actual facts of our social life.

The truth is that with us what is unfit and wicked and anti-social does not perish. We do not allow it to perish. We are, if you please, too soft-hearted for that, and we could not be otherwise if we so desired. The first appearance in our life of the humane and brotherly spirit which begins to raise us out of the dust begins also to check the play of those destructive forces which act as scavengers among the lower orders of life. The unfit perish? Why, do but consider the career of the tramp, who flourishes exceedingly as a mere parasite upon the social order. Consider what has been going on of late in England, where a set of crazy law-breakers have held society almost literally by the throat, simply because society was not willing to see these lunatics starve themselves to death.

No; however natural selection may work to the advantage of lower forms of life, it does little or nothing to uplift the life of men. With us a new method has

to come into operation. Our society cannot destroy that human worthlessness which always tends to accumulate in increasing amounts at its base; and, if it would not be ultimately choked by this rising tide of filth and corruption, it must set itself to work to transform that rubbish into something wholesome and helpful for the world's use.

Now, it was through the lips of Jesus of Nazareth that the first clear announcement of this as the real turning-point of the world's life came. The Son of man is come to save that which was lost, was his explicit declaration; and, the more one studies his thought, the more one feels that his mind was fully centered upon this problem of lifting up the fallen and bringing new life to lifeless hearts. However in other respects he looked upon the world, he saw that here on life's lowest levels was what stood most in the way of the kingdom of heaven, and he addressed himself to that difficulty as to the very key position in the great fight between good and evil. It is no accident that now in all Christian lands intense and devoted effort is being put forth as nowhere else to grapple with this huge problem. All this vast sum of labor now being given in schools, hospitals and prisons, in factories and slums, to strengthen and purify the worse and weaker elements of our common life, may be traced directly to the influence and inspiration of him who said that it was his mission to save the lost; who chose his disciples mostly from one of the lowliest of human callings, and whose gospel was first preached to humble and neglected classes. Surely he deserves to be called the savior at least of that portion of mankind which sits most within the darkness of the shadow of death; and, when we see that the kingdom of heaven is forever

impossible till these are saved, we should be ready to hail him as the savior of his race.

It would be interesting, if there were time, to take up many of the ideas of the Gospel to see how they fit in with this central and controlling purpose of the mind of Christ. Note, for example, his constant and reiterated emphasis upon man's forgiveness of man. The world of his day was deeply exercised, as it always is, about the terms on which God's forgiveness for sin could be secured. But he apparently saw that human forgiveness was much harder to attain, and that nothing weighed more heavily upon those who had once stumbled, to keep them down, than the vindictive and unforgiving temper of others of their kind. "Forgive, forgive," he was always saying to those whom his words could reach; and, like other of his maxims and exhortations, we must interpret this not alone from the rather narrow standpoint of regard for personal righteousness, but in recognition of his absorbing interest in the kingdom of heaven among men,—that complete and perfect social state wherein all should live as God's children, and none should be trampled under foot.

But now, if it may be granted that he was, above all, the savior of lost souls, and that in this we have touched the very heart and centre of his conscious purpose, I wish to add some brief account of the motive and the method in this work, which his followers may legitimately draw from him. Thus far we have spoken of saving the lost as an undertaking which society must attempt for its own self-preservation. But Jesus himself did not much appeal to this consideration as a means of attracting men to his gospel. Some things he bade them do for the kingdom of heaven's sake, that is to say, in

love and loyalty for the great ideal of what human life should be. But he knew a better way to fire the common heart with a burning enthusiasm for the work he wished his disciples to do. He contrived by his teaching and example to fill their minds with a sense of the infinite worth of what the great ones of earth mostly held to be worthless and deserving only of contempt. It is as if he had shown them that this that was accounted the mere refuse of the world's life, was really as so much precious ore from which it was possible to extract enormous riches of the very greatest value.

Nothing is more marked as a characteristic of the intellectually superior kind of mind throughout the world generally than its boundless scorn for the common man. Read the memoirs of him who was called China's "Grand Old Man," who was indeed one of the most remarkable persons that the later world has produced, and note his feeling of the utter cheapness and worthlessness of human life in the lower social ranks. Men and women there were no more to him than so many flies. They might be slaughtered by thousands, and there was with him no sense of loss.

Read your Shakespeare, and see how one of the greatest minds in all history despised the ordinary kind of man. The multitude might be common cattle so far as any feeling about them on his part was concerned. They interested him rather less than would a colony of ants, and that they were good for anything, save to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the benefit of their betters, did not enter into his computation of values. I think every person of education, possessing some original power of thought, knows what provocation and tendency there is to adopt that mental attitude. And it

is quite certain that Jesus was not blind to those weaknesses and foibles of human nature which often tempt us to be contemptuous of our kind. But he saw something else in men, which made him love them, spite of the defacements and defilements that had come upon them; and he made his followers feel that the humblest of human kind was of sufficient worth in the sight of heaven to be redeemed at whatever cost.

Jesus, said Mr. Emerson, who certainly was not a Christian sentimentalist, "Jesus was the only man who ever lived to estimate the worth of a human soul at its full value." There is the Christian motive for saving the lost; not mere pity for suffering, and not an enlightened self-interest, but profound and overmastering reverence for that image of God enshrined in every human heart, to reveal the beauty of which one longs to clear away the jungle growth that has overlaid and polluted it. Among the spiritual heroes of the past I know of none other who has infused just this feeling into the minds of men, or whose mastery of their spirits promises to produce so much of it in days to come.

And the method which Jesus chose for carrying out his purpose stands in the same wide contrast to the general way of the world as does the motive by which he was inspired. It was a method which dealt with the centre of life rather than its circumference, which aimed first of all to change the hearts of men, trusting that reformation to make all needful outward changes, rather than embark on the uncertain venture of giving them an external form of law to which their hearts might be in no wise attuned.

The world at large is still obsessed with the notion that it can bring in the kingdom of heaven by violent

means, can secure the enactment of laws that will abolish wickedness both in high places and low, and thus establish a rule of equity and peace. Ministers of religion are as much under this illusion as any one else, and neglect their proper business to engage in the relatively unprofitable game of politics. It is undoubtedly true that the environment in which we live can be made easier or harder for the good man to pursue his worthy ends and for the bad man to conduct his nefarious enterprises. And it is quite worth doing, thus to smooth the path of the righteous while we make the way of the transgressor as hard as we can. But they who imagine that by accomplishing this they are really solving the world's problem greatly deceive themselves. The selfish and lustful and cruel are not to be cured in this fashion, and we ought to know by this time that, if a man is really bent upon evil, it is impossible to pile up obstacles enough before him so that he will not seek evil every chance he gets.

It comes back to the same question of saving the lost; the morally lost as well as the spiritually lost; because many an outwardly prosperous person comes nearer to being a castaway on the sea of existence than are some of those whom we account "down and out." That is the great spiritual task to which Jesus addressed himself by purely spiritual means; perceiving that whatever expedients and palliatives the outward world might yield, the only real remedy to be applied was a remedy of the spirit. That is where the work of the church belongs,—in the realm of the spirit,—though in this our day they are comparatively few who seem to feel its reality and importance. For one thing probably any reform to be there effected is too slow for the impatient hopes of the

majority of mankind, and they are apt to think that trust in the spirit is nothing but an excuse for lack of effort to right the world's wrongs.

Slow it undoubtedly is; but the failure of Christianity to get on farther with its task of remaking this world of ours ought not to be charged up to the Founder of the Church, because for the most part the church has simply ignored and neglected his method altogether. Slow, at the best, the growth of man's spiritual life will be, yet after all these ages of tinkering with political machinery to see if the ideal society and state can be induced to come that way, does the world's method appear any more expeditious than the method of Christ?

And, again, the majority of people do not much believe as yet, one may suppose, in his way of making the world better, because they do not believe, at heart, that this race of ours ever can be much different from what it is to-day. Human nature, we think, is about what it was at the beginning of things, and about what it will be when the record of several thousand more years has been added to the scroll of history. Well, we cannot prove that man on earth will ever be a much different being; but Jesus was very certain that he could be essentially changed, and lack of faith on that point was with him, I think, very near the bottom of infidelity. The faith at whose absence he continually marvelled was faith in the power of the spirit; and what is that power good for if, being admitted to human hearts, it cannot transform their inward gloom to light? The question of uplifting human nature is mainly a question of giving it a new scale of values, a new set of ideals, a new sense of what it is that makes life worth living.

Heaven knows that people are not now so well content

with what they have as to render them indifferent to the promise of improvement in their lot; and they are not generally so very blind to the truth that a change of circumstance does not rid them of their rooted sorrow and half-despair. Every time we repeat the Lord's Prayer we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It ought to be in us to have faith that the kingdom can come; that human nature everywhere has the capacity so to see the truth of things, so to feel the beauty of holiness, so to love all that is pure and lovely and of good report, as to live in supreme loyalty to life's best and noblest ends.

If we cannot believe this, God help us, what can we believe? If man, as we know him, has no promise of making for himself at last this heaven 'on earth, what promise is in him of becoming fit for any heavenly life hereafter? Yet how shall men learn to believe, or find courage to trust in what so generally seems to them too good to be true, save as the gospel which Christ brought is over and over shouted into their ears; and as, hand in hand, supporting each other's timidity, they gradually acquire confidence that in this wonderful universe nothing can be too good to be true?

As I observe men it is borne in upon me more and more how few of them have any enlightened and reasonable sense of what the church is for, and how it serves in the world any vital purpose. But if the considerations here urged are valid, then next to the home, the church, dealing directly as it does with our spiritual life, is the most important of human institutions.

That religion at the present day is a very faint and inadequate reflection of the thought of Christ is only too sadly evident to discerning minds. But to make it

what he would desire it to be; to fill it with his purpose, his spirit, and his faith, seems to me the highest aim to which one can dedicate his life. We shall have no much better world till, as a people, we get a better faith; and we express the sum and substance of all that is desirable for the world of men, when we say that we should like to transform the common mind more and more into the likeness of the mind of Christ.

THE TRUE GREATNESS OF CHRIST.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—PHIL. iii. 13-14.

When we look up into the sky at night all the unnumbered host of stars there displayed to our sight appear to be about equally distant from us, and we do not notice any great disparity in their size. What we seem to see was never better described perhaps than in the language of our greatest poet: “This majestic roof, fretted with golden fires.” In this far distance there is no perspective apparent to the uninstructed sight, to tell it that the moon is one of the smallest of heavenly bodies, and that many twinkling lights which appear so little are really larger than our own great sun. Till science came to arrange these worlds in something like their proper order, all men thought of them as if they had been painted on the inner surface of a huge dome-like structure arching over their heads.

Very much the same effect with regard to personages belonging to a sacred past has been produced by reigning theories about the Bible. That Book has been supposed to be, from cover to cover, the workmanship of the Holy Spirit. Every word and phrase of it, so men have said, was written by divine inspiration. In effect, God dic-

tated even the least and smallest part of it, so that it must all be received as the utterance of a perfect mind. The consequence has been that all persons in the Bible have seemed to be very much on the same level, or in the same plane; to be essentially of the same character, and to speak with something like equal authority. Paul, for example, has been made practically as great a teacher as Christ, and what he said was no more to be called in question than the words of the Master himself. Under this view all the Apostles have held equal rank. No substantial difference has been noted between one prophet and another, or between the men of Old Testament and those of New Testament times. All were mouthpieces of the same divine intelligence, and small discrimination could be made therefore between one and another, as being more or less true expositors of a divine will.

Far otherwise do we see these men of the past, when historical study has given them their true place, and they begin to appear in the actual perspective of the world's life. Then we realize that some of these characters are very great, and some are very small. Some of them speak words of eternal life, and some speak only a considerable degree of human foolishness. Some are as real as lofty mountains; and some, like Moses and Abraham, lie upon a far horizon where it is difficult to distinguish between cloud-land and solid earth. There is much to be placed to the credit of that older view of the Bible. The supreme reverence for this wonderful book engendered by that view helped to give it for a long time a mighty influence over the hearts of men, and to make it a vast power for good throughout the nations of the West; a fact to be unhesitatingly seen and acknowledged. And yet, in two ways, this view worked to produce unfortunate results.

For one thing, the habit of putting all those Biblical characters on much the same level elevated to the highest rank and set in the foreground of Christian thought a great deal of the Bible which really had no such merit. One catches glimpses here and there in the literature of older days of much dreary and mistaken effort to extract edification from the wars of the Hebrews, as set forth in the book of Joshua; and it is quite evident that early Protestantism was as much nourished on the somewhat fierce language and spirit of the Old Testament prophets as upon the teachings of Christ. A company of ministers sent out from Boston to observe the preaching and character of the celebrated Mr. Sunday lately brought back a report that he was preaching the doctrine of the atonement, taking his ideas from the "substitutional theory" held by Paul. Now, this really meant that he was preaching Paul quite as much as he was preaching Christ; that he was in fact putting the two side by side, as if what one said was just as important as anything said by the other. That, of course, is the natural effect of supposing that both were equally inspired.

But as we begin to recover the real history of Apostolic times and learn to read the New Testament in the light of historical criticism, it becomes evident how much Paul himself would have been dismayed to find people using his words as if every one of them was an utterance of the Holy Ghost. He had great ideas, splendid ideas, ideas entirely worthy the Master whom he served, and perfectly consonant with his teachings. A large part of the time, however, he was engaged in petty discussions, with people of his own race, concerning matters that were to them of stupendous consequence, but to him were of slight importance. He was carrying the new faith to

people whose old faith had somehow to be placated, before they would listen to the Gospel he had to preach; and with them, he was continually engaged in disputes about questions belonging to their old order of life, which had to be disposed of by the rabbinical logic with which they were familiar.

Now, one unhappy result of the old way of reading the Bible, I say, was to elevate all this, in his epistles, to the same level with those greater passages in his writings where he sets forth the essentials of the Christian faith. A missionary to the Chinese, or to the Indians, would strive to adapt his utterance to their comprehension, and to clothe his thought in language which they could understand. How foolish it would be to take some such discourse as that for an adequate exposition and representation of what was in the missionary's own mind! Yet precisely that folly is committed by those who do not see that a considerable part of the writings of Paul is addressed, not to the instruction of Christians at the present day, but to the conversion of a peculiar set of people in his own time. It is very uncertain business to talk about his "substitutional theory of the atonement." It is hard to say how much significance he himself attached to those wrappings of current Jewish thought in which he "did up" a certain amount of Gospel truth, in order to commend it better to the minds of people as he found them. When one wants to know what men really think it is better not to be too much governed by their polemic utterances, which are aimed chiefly at the removal of a particular state of mind in other people.

In the next place, though this is the same point stated in another way, the effect of the old belief about the inspiration of the Bible was somewhat to cloud and ob-

scure the real greatness of persons in the narrative who ought to be seen as overtopping by far all the rest. It had, for example, not much standard of measurement by which to determine that Isaiah was a far greater prophet than Jeremiah. Particularly, by making so much of minor persons and incidents, it worked to hide in some measure from human eyes the surpassing greatness of the mind of Christ. In that same report of which mention has been made, the noted Evangelist who had been under observation and discussion was spoken of as a modern "John the Baptist." This was said with the evident intention of paying him a very great compliment; but if we examine it a little we shall see that it was a compliment of a quite doubtful character. For John the Baptist was by no means a good Christian. During his lifetime at least, and probably for long afterward, his followers did not become disciples of Christ, but maintained their separate movement. He himself was never sure that Jesus was the Messiah. Though at the moment of baptism he received a sign from heaven, it is plain that he came to doubt afterward whether that was a true sign, and sent followers of his own to observe and report how far these doubts were justified.

Jesus himself said of John that, great as he was as a prophet, the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he; and by the kingdom of heaven he meant always not merely something far off in the skies, but a new order of life on earth, which he had come to found. He was thus saying to his disciples that, if they were true to his teachings, any one of them, even the humblest, was greater than John. He did not recognize that "forerunner" as having any lot or part in the work he had come to do. To say of a man that he is a modern John

the Baptist is to charge against him that he belongs to a prechristian, if not an antichristian order of thought. Surely that could not have been the intent of the good men who applied this phrase to one who is supposed to be bringing many souls to Christ; but it shows, I think, the confusion of thought I am endeavoring to point out.

It is rather a good illustration of that lack of discrimination which old views of the Bible permitted, and even tended to foster. The truth is that Jesus and John ought not to be put into the same category. They did not stand side by side, but belonged to different orders of life. One of them fades almost into utter insignificance, in any intelligent comparison that is made between them. John was a reformer of rather a common and ordinary stamp. He had not the smallest conception of the kind of work that Jesus had undertaken to do in the world. Very likely, if he had been alive at the time, and had chanced to be among those who stood before the judgment seat of Pilate when Jesus was condemned and sentenced, he would have lifted his voice with the rabble crying out for crucifixion; for Jesus was not at all the kind of Messiah whom John was looking to see. When such a man is classed with Jesus, as if they were really fellow-workmen in the same sublime undertaking, it means a sort of apotheosis of the ordinary and commonplace. For though the Baptist was undoubtedly a good man and a significant sign of the times, he had, so far as we can discover, nothing whatever of the vision which filled the soul of Christ.

Worse still, this confusion of thought means that people who esteem themselves the best of Christians may still have seen very little of what was most majestic and divine in the life of their Master. And this leads

to the thought I wish to state; which is that a great deal of theorizing in the church, while nominally and professedly exalting the name of Christ, has only accomplished his exaltation in name, never having sufficed to reveal his true greatness to mankind. Men who do not seem to see the difference that existed between Jesus and John must be rather blind to the essential characteristics of the mind and thought of Christ. They who say such things as have here been quoted may fancy themselves special champions of the name and fame of Christ. Indeed, they are apt to think and to say that modern tendencies in the church are designed to degrade the author of our faith from his high place, and to make him of little or no consequence to the world of to-day. But this matter ought rather to be put the other way about. It is they who are still largely ignorant how great a figure Christ is in the world's history; and it is modern thought which has been acquiring the material to inform and convince men how clearly and certainly his mind denotes the highest altitude to which the life of humanity has anywhere risen. To the charge that so-called liberal types of Christianity are now becoming, or tend to become, Christless, I should wish to reply that it is they above all others who are now charged to take Christ to the modern world; and that it is a vastly larger, not a smaller, personality which they are beginning to hold up to the wondering gaze of mankind. This will be found to be true, as a matter of observation, by those who take the trouble to inform themselves of the facts in the case.

In days when men believed in the divine right of kings, it was generally the office, more than the man who held the office, that received the homage of human hearts.

Many who wore a crown were persons of very indifferent capacity; sometimes they were almost monsters of iniquity; yet all of them were hedged about with a certain atmosphere of divinity, and their subjects paid unstinted reverence to the mere robes they wore. Now that we know, in the cold light of history, what kind of man it was who succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of England, it seems to us rather pitiful, and almost revolting, that men of great intellectual power belonging to that remarkable age should have fawned upon him; praised him as if he were a being of almost supernatural intelligence, and abased themselves into the very dust before his mediocre mind. The explanation is, that through the medium of their inherited feelings about the sacredness of a king, they saw not so much the man himself as a figment of the imagination which they had put in his place. This helped the small man who had received a throne, but it also prevented the people from realizing the true greatness of the great king, when he did appear.

Now we have given up the notion that a king is God's special vicegerent and representative on earth, being endowed by him with special qualities for the discharge of his high office; but it does not follow that he who is thus placed in high office becomes nothing but a cheap and common man. Queen Elizabeth no doubt received much homage wherever she moved; but never, at the utmost height of her career, did she so command the heart of a great nation as did Queen Victoria; and in the case of the latter there was hardly a shred of the old doctrine of divine right left to enhance her worth in the common sight. What king of all the ages ever loomed so large in the memory of those who followed him, as do Washington and Lincoln in the story of our past? Rev-

erence for greatness does not die when it is deprived of the glamour of official dress. On the contrary, it takes on a deeper tone, becomes more real, more lasting, and more true, when it has nothing on which to base itself save the nobility of heart and life that lifts some men so high above the level of their kind.

Now Jesus has been made the official Saviour of mankind. As a supernatural being, he is supposed to have borne the penalty of human sin, that the race might go free; and for this service he has been exalted to be the king of all heavenly realms. I do not say that this is a bad or stupid conception. There is some talk about the "immorality" of the idea of atonement which does not display much depth of spiritual insight. The doctrine has sprung out of deep places in human life, and has great spiritual significance for the whole Christian world. But I do say that there is apt to be a certain amount of artificiality about these ideas of man's redemption, and that they have half hidden from men the true heart of Christ; the most perfect embodiment of the nobler qualities of our being ever born into the world.

Consider the story of his life, just in its natural human outline; apart from all theories as to where he came from and who he was. Here was a young man who suddenly came forth from the life of the common people with a burning message in his soul, and the great vision of a new and purified world before his mind. God was to him the most real and intimate of all beings, his constant companion and father and friend. He saw men about him distracted, lost, and astray, as sheep having no shepherd; and he saw the path they should walk to find the green pastures and still waters which divine love had prepared for them. One way or another, at first probably

he did not very clearly know how, he felt himself called of God to lead these men out of their hunger and want into the fulness of mercy and peace.

Thus he went out to teach the people. Little of what he taught remains, but we have a few of his sayings, so profound that we could only have them, elsewhere, from the lips of great philosophers, who had meditated, long and deeply, on the intricate problems of human life. The wonder is that he, an untrained man, should have said these things out of his clear mental insight, his spotless purity of mind, and his communion with the great soul of all things. We have, in addition to these sayings, a few parables that he told to his followers, as perfect and flawless gems of human speech as can be found in the range of the whole world's literature. Small as the sum of this teaching is, it betokens a mind of the most astounding capacity. So far as we know, he taught no system of life or conduct. But he did teach principles of being and of action, which make the only solid rock there is on which systems can be built, and departing from which our structures, whether of faith or practice, stand on nothing but sand.

By degrees he came to feel that God had appointed him to be the promised Messiah of his people; and this became the belief of his chosen band of followers, though it is very doubtful whether during his lifetime it was ever proclaimed abroad. But the Messiah he proposed to be was far different from any conceived of by other members of his race. He would have nothing to do with any conquest by force, and would rule only as God ruled, by the might of his love and the weight of his moral purpose.

Before him shone the picture of a world which had renounced its selfishness and greed; which had turned

away from all its sin and wrong, and had learned to live, as one great family, on terms of mutual helpfulness and good-will. Some day God would make his world like that; and the day might come soon. When that day and hour should be, no man might know, but surely it must be near at hand. And when that new world should appear God would teach him to direct and govern it aright; not that he might have glory, but that the Father in heaven might be praised.

Teaching these things, bidding men prepare for the coming kingdom, and living a life of perfect sweetness, simplicity, and love, he finally went up to Jerusalem to continue his work. Already he had encountered much hostility from those who had little cause, so far as they knew, to welcome the coming of a day of the Lord. At the national Capitol, in a moment of indignation, he drove out of the Temple the merchants and money changers, who had transformed the whole ritual of worship, there enacted, into a money-making scheme for the enrichment of the priests; and for this cause, more than for any other perhaps, he was speedily arrested, tried, and put to death. He went to his cross, the noblest, the strongest, and most beautiful martyr who ever suffered thus; in undiminished confidence that God was asking this sacrifice of him in order that, through him, though he might go down into death and defeat, the kingdom might come.

A few days afterward tidings were spread abroad which in one sense or another, as it seems to me, we can but credit, that certain of his disciples had seen him alive in some new form, though he swiftly faded out of their sight; that, though he was in another state of being, he was still near them, and would be with them till the end

of the world. In the strength of this new hope they took up the mission he had left in their hands, and carried forward what soon became the mightiest religious movement in the world's history.

Now I submit that the story, as thus told, does not need to borrow anything more, from supernatural sources, in order to make it of thrilling interest. The beauty of it, the pathos, the wonder, the tragedy and the sublimity of it, cannot be enhanced by anything that philosophical speculation may add to it. There it stands, the greatest thing in the world's records, though we offer not one single belief by way of explaining its mystery and its charm. As man is a reasonable being, of course he wants some explanation, and he must needs have his theories as to who this remarkable being was, and how he came into the world; but what I insist upon is that the wonder itself, and not the explanation of it, is the great thing to keep in mind. One must first see, in natural ways, how great in spirit this life truly is, before his method of accounting for it can have much significance. It is a sad mistake, after such theories have been formed, to think that the wonder is really in the theory; and it is a very stupid fear to dread that, if a certain way of explaining how Christ came to be what he was breaks down, there will be nothing left of him which men will any more prize and regard. Either the simple outline of his career, as it has here been sketched, contains a great mystery, and a great reality, that cannot fail to hold the world's attention, or, if that be an empty and meaningless presentation, all the supernatural adjuncts that can be piled about it will not save it from sinking out of the world's memory. Either the life itself, as it was actually lived among men, is a great pattern for all the

ages to note and heed, or nothing that can be put before it in pre-existent realms, and nothing that can be joined to it in worlds beyond this, can make it a phenomenon that will continue to attract the reverent gaze of mankind. I do not say that it is wrong or needless to believe this or that. I say that these beliefs about him are, essentially, satisfactions for the intellect, not for the heart.

To my own thinking, in so far as the church of the past has been anything more than a kind of political power and agency, its spiritual strength has come out of minds which, quite apart from reigning creeds, have been fascinated and mastered by the simple story of the life of Christ. In later times that kind of interest has been too much overlaid and obliterated by an intolerant dogmatism, which never itself revealed anything of what Christ truly was, but was only devised originally to explain how he came to be so great.

Modern Christianity is now striving to break through the network of its inherited ideas, sufficiently to receive a fresh sense of the reality, the loveliness, and the authority, of the things of the spirit, as that may be derived from the greatest master of the life of the spirit the world has ever seen.

All the tumult and unrest of the church in these later days means an attempt to put away enough of the accretions and traditions which Christianity has received from past time to permit a closer touch with the real mind and thought of Christ. He is to be the spiritual hero, the supreme inspiration and guide of the church in days to come, as he has never been in the past. Can any one suppose that if Christendom, during all these centuries, had really been drinking deep of his spirit, instead

of believing formal doctrines about him, great nations of the West would now stand locked in the awful death-grapple which fills our world with suspense and gloom?

Multitudes of hearts are beginning to feel that Ecclesiasticism has too much defrauded mankind of a living Christ, and to see that salvation must consist not in any kind of belief, but in doing the things that he said. Men must believe as they can; but that is nothing, unless they see in him the mark of the prize of their high calling in God, toward which they are set to strive. To love the kind of humanity which he represents; to regard him as standing on a far summit up which our race is set to climb; to believe in him as God's thought of man, and to accept his teaching of the nearness of an infinite Providence of good, so that we are sure of an almighty power to help us in our endeavor to emancipate ourselves from sin and wrong; this is the Christianity which is now everywhere striving to throw off the shackles of dogmatism. As it succeeds in that endeavor the Man of Nazareth will become not less, but more, an epitome and embodiment of mankind's highest aspirations and its dearest hopes.

CHRIST AND PILATE.

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?—JOHN xviii. 37, 38.

One of the most picturesque and suggestive contrasts to be found in the whole of human history is that where the Galilean prophet stands, a prisoner on trial for his life, before the judgment-seat of the Roman governor of his native land. Two great antagonistic types of human existence there met, and looked into each other's eyes, without hatred; though on both sides, doubtless, there was recognition of the gulf which stood between them. Jesus, indeed, was incapable of hating any man, though there was marked difference in his feeling toward those with whom he was brought into contact. For some reason he refused to make any plea whatever before the high priest and the Sanhedrin, who were responsible for his arrest. In the presence of those judges which the law of his own nation had set over him, he maintained almost unbroken silence, and would not stoop to answer the charges there brought against him. To Pilate, however, he was willing to talk. Though he made no defence against the accusation of the priests and asked nothing either from the mercy or the justice of his judge, he did reply to some of the questions which Pilate put to him. One concludes that he felt a certain respect for that man, set in high place, which he did not feel for the fanatic priests, by whom he had been haled before this seat of judgment.

On Pilate's side it is quite evident that he was deeply impressed by the singular personality with which he was called to deal. He felt a strong inclination at least to rescue this harmless rabbi from the angry mob by which he was beset; and we are led to think that it was something more than compassion which moved him. There was some sense of a power and greatness, in that bound and helpless figure, which he could not comprehend. For Pilate was no brutal soldier: he was a cultivated man. His very indecision is conclusive proof that he was that kind of person whom we call "intellectual." It is more than likely, all things considered, that he was a man of much refinement and education. And there was something about the bearing of that Jewish prophet which enforced from him a measure of puzzled respect.

Certainly, these two might well have looked upon each other with peculiar interest. There, virtually, stood two quite different worlds face to face. In one was the old Pagan civilization, proud of the many triumphs it had won, but already weary of burdens becoming too heavy for it to bear. Through the other's eyes looked out that new Christian world, destined to do long battle with its Pagan antagonist and to begin all over again the building of man's house of life, from the very foundations upward.

How much the two saw of this, as they confronted each other, it would be difficult to say. Probably not much; for to no human vision is it given to look far into the future. But human consciousness can always feel a great deal more than it can see; and I think Jesus and Pilate must have felt somewhat as two vast world-spirits might be imagined to feel, entering the lists to wrestle before high Heaven for supremacy. In such a contest there could be no personal vindictiveness; and I like to

fancy that these two historic characters measured each other with no small degree of mutual respect.

It would require, of course, long and elaborate discourse to set forth, in any adequate way, the difference between them. But perhaps the deepest and most significant note of that difference was struck in the few words already quoted from the brief colloquy they held together. To Pilate's question whether or not Jesus assumed to be a king of men,—that is to say, what answer he made to the charge that he was, politically, a seditious person,—Jesus would give no direct reply. Probably this was because that charge was both true and false. Immediately, he had no political purpose whatever. Of the accusation that he was conspiring to raise a power to make war upon established authority, he was entirely guiltless. That he sought in this way to make himself a king was a trumped-up and ridiculous charge. But that in another way he felt entitled to exercise authority and claim allegiance, he would hide from nobody; and he was much too wise and too honest not to realize that the purpose he had in mind involved more or less of political revolution.

"Am I a king?" he seemed to say. "Yes! and No! You shall think what you please about that. But for this was I born, and for this came I into the world,—to bear witness to the truth." There was his mission; and there was his innermost life, set before that Roman governor as directly and tersely as words could be made to tell what he was and what he wanted to do. In a world which was altogether like the dwellers in Plato's cave, looking only upon shadows cast into their dim twilight by realities with which they had lost direct contact, he was the one man who saw the absolute truth

of things, who knew that he saw that truth, and who was therefore full of a burning desire to make others see. And Pilate, so long immured in that cavern where only shadows could be seen, so much bewildered by his attempt to make their inconsequent dance and flicker spell out some intelligible meaning,—Pilate could only ejaculate, "What is truth!" His rejoinder, we may be sure, was uttered in no mood of contempt. He must have looked with somewhat envious eyes upon that prisoner before him, thinking that he would give all his possessions to be so sure of anything as that man seemed. But he was utterly unable to believe that any human being had a right to such certainty of heart; and to him, therefore, this man of Nazareth could be nothing more than an unusually impressive and fascinating dreamer of strange dreams.

This is the contrast I desire to make; between one whose whole soul is filled with a vision of truth, who knows in every fibre of his being that what he has to declare is a word of eternal life and power, because he stands in intimate contact and communion with the everlasting reality; and another who in his search for truth has so drawn apart from immediate touch with what is real as finally to lose the sense of reality, and who must therefore behold everything, as it were, swimming in a sea of uncertainty and doubt.

Our words and thoughts are, in a way, like paper currency. This currency is good and has worth in so far as it can be converted, at any moment, back into gold. Take away that convertibility into standard coin, and instantly paper money becomes of questionable worth. Let it continue thus separated from that which it is a mere promise to pay, and, presently, it loses the function

of money altogether, becoming about as useless as an equal bulk of waste rags. Words and thoughts, in the same way, have value in so far as they can be converted into impressions of reality. They are designed to be symbols, representations, of this reality. That is what they are for, so that, for example, instead of taking our neighbor by the hand and leading him to see what we have seen, we can describe to him that spectacle, and thus put into his mind an impression corresponding to our own. Language and thought fulfil the office of our paper currency. That is to say, they facilitate our exchange of impressions and ideas. Instead of a crude barter of mental commodities, we can have real commerce of thought, extending throughout the habitable globe. But always these words and concepts, which we thus transfer from mind to mind, come down at last to one foundation. To be worth anything to us, we must be able to turn them, at no great delay, into impressions of reality. That is the solid bed-rock of truth upon which our mental life, with its whole traffic, stands.

And the besetting peril of all the world's culture is almost exactly that which forever attends its commerce; viz., a state of things in which its currency cannot be converted back into the coin which it represents. We call it inflation in the business world, when the promises to pay that pass from hand to hand cannot be redeemed by the production of what has a corresponding value in itself. In our mental world, words and thoughts are apt to get separated, in the same way, from impressions of reality. The mind forgets what they stand for. They become like fictitious counters in a game. We have mere jugglers, posing as philosophers, playing with them, and shifting them about so dextrously that we stand

bewildered by the performance. What does this mean? we ask. This man has proved that black is white and white is black. Our world of reality is gone. Behold, we know not anything. We cannot be sure that any one of our ideas is worth its face value. For aught we can tell, if we undertake to prove it, it may be left nothing but a worthless delusion upon our hands.

That kind of fear which pervades the commercial world in time of panic has of late years made itself felt throughout our whole world of thought. And just that kind of threat of impending universal bankruptcy stands over the spiritual realm, when the world gets too much out of touch with life's fundamental values. Into precisely that sort of insolvency all our culture tends to run, except as it is perpetually called back to what is alone of permanent worth,—the mind's own sense or impression of reality. Unsophisticated human nature always stands quite close to nature, and feels very surely the attributes of the world about it. In nothing has the civilized man failed more lamentably than in his failure to understand the primitive life of the savage, out of which he has himself sprung. Modern learning must needs conceive of the savage as one who forms all sorts of false theories about the world of which he makes a part. He believes in gods and spirits, it is said, because that is his foolish way of accounting for the life and movement of what he sees. Now the savage has a great many false theories, as we do also. But he does not make them out of nothing. He deduces them, as best he can, from that sense of the reality of things in which he is often a great deal wiser than many of his teachers.

That is to say, the savage feels that the world is saturated, through and through, not only with power, but

with wisdom. In some inexplicable way all things know what they are doing. The animals are wise. All growing things display a marvellous skill. Nature is not anywhere merely blind, but regulates its movements and builds its forms, like an intelligent being. That is the fixed idea of the savage mind, on which it rears such structures of the understanding as it is able to construct. And in this it is the savage who is right, and it is the civilized man who is most apt to be totally wrong. The former's impression of the world comes back, persistently, upon the thinking mind. That mind forms certain theories, designed to show how the whole process of the world's life can go on in a purely mechanical way, without the admixture in it of any glimmer of intelligence, and then that mind, after cherishing such illusions for a season, has to come back and say, "But the intelligence is there!" It is merely absurd to say that we have knowledge and skill, and then to deny that there is knowledge and skill in the life, other than our own, by which we are everywhere surrounded.

The tendency of the intellectual life to commit that very absurdity is a good example of what I wish to point out,—that the world's culture is always in danger of losing touch with a fundamental reality of things, and then it cannot be sure of anything. It takes its concepts, as it were, apart into some interior realm, to see what it can make of them, and, when it has fashioned them into what appears to be a rational structure, it is quite apt to look upon that structure, rather than to the actualities of existence, as a criterion of truth, and, so looking, it is sure to be left, at last, with Pilate's question upon its lips,—"What is truth?"

We are forced to see that intellectual cultivation tends

very often to make people sceptical, to fill their minds with doubt, and to some extent with irresolution. No more faithful portrait of the intellectual man was ever painted than that set before us in Shakespeare's Hamlet, where we are made to see the whole fabric of the soul honey-combed with uncertainty. In large measure, of course, these doubts are the necessary steps that lead to new knowledge; and in many respects the position of the agnostic is the wisest that one can assume. But the habit of questioning always tends to go too far. I have known men who were uncertain whether or not the outward world had real existence, and who were, I think, a little proud of that uncertainty. And I know no better phrase to apply to such a state of mind than that of mental bankruptcy.

The mind, of course, has no more right to feel that all its impressions are entirely valid than the business man has a right to feel that he can turn his whole capital into gold without shrinkage or loss. But, when it comes to a point, with this latter, that he is not certain whether anything would be left to him as the result of such liquidation, the next step is, generally, to wind up his business altogether. And there is a speculation of the mind which always leads toward this same end. What we call culture, in proportion to its activity, always produces a plentiful supply of these same results. Our society of the present day is widely pervaded by religious uncertainty and unrest,—not only by doubts of this or that particular religious affirmation, but by a feeling as if the whole fabric of religion stood on nothing but illusion. That is because culture so much tends to wander off into an artificial world, and get itself removed from the basis of reality. I make the assertion deliberately and dis-

tinctly that it is not the real man who, through progress of knowledge, loses his faith in those fundamental verities that underlie the religious life: it is merely the academic man who so misses his way, among mental concepts, that after a time he cannot find his road back to the sense of reality.

This tendency of cultivation to end in mere scepticism and uncertainty, of course, puts tremendous weapons into the hands of that religious conservatism with which the world appears to be somewhat overweighted. The common man is apt to have a very strong and, I should say, a most wholesome sense that education can confer nothing upon him which will quite make up for the loss of his religious faith; and, so long as scholarship can be made to seem to him the enemy of religion, so long it will be easy to frighten him away from that mental freedom whose caravan-route appears to him to be headed merely toward a trackless desert.

This makes the reform of religion a very difficult and, on any wide scale an all but impossible task; though there is nothing, I should say, which the world needs more than the purification and enlightenment of its religious faith. About the most unhappy state into which any society can fall is that where all its ignorant classes are solidified in support of a religion which no educated person can hold, while its educated classes are frankly uninterested in the whole question of religion. Religious progress and reform is there manifestly impossible; and, when it comes to be a trial of strength between an irreligious culture and an unprogressive faith, I do not see how any one can predict otherwise than that the more primitive thing is most likely to survive. For this reason that contrast to which I have already called attention, between the man whose

soul is filled with a vision of truth which he has drawn from immediate touch with life's great realities and the man who has fallen into bewildered wonderment whether or not anything is true, seems to me a contrast of supreme interest.

The world's great poets and prophets and seers have all spoken as this greatest among them spoke, out of a deep inward conviction of what life is and what the world is, springing up within them as they have held their consciousness close to the great sum of being. And men have listened to them, not because they selfishly wanted assurance that they were going to live hereafter. It is by no means certain that, as a rule, they have been so very keen about that, or that they have found it altogether pleasant and agreeable to be watched over by unseen eyes. The world has listened because this prophetic message has found an echo in its own heart, because these great souls have spoken what human nature everywhere thinks and feels, when it gives its heart a chance to speak. Tyndall, the speculative thinker, could be quite sure in his laboratory that he saw, in the chemical affinity of material atoms, "a promise and potency of all things." But Tyndall, the man, standing on an Alpine peak and looking out over that stupendous prospect of black rock and dazzling snow, found his mind wrestling with the question, "Is there no intelligence, in all this boundless universe, that knows more of these things than I do?"

The reality of a wisdom working in and through the whole of existence, so far as existence is revealed to us, is one that no mind can get away from, into the denials of atheism, save as it turns its back on reality and takes up with metaphysics instead. What are called the denials of science are, quite often, nothing with which science has

anything whatever to do. They are merely the denials of a very amateurish sort of metaphysics, which some scientific men have seen fit to adopt. And the call is always to come back, from these ingenious attempts to penetrate life's inner mysteries, to a broad, deep sense of what is real and true. There are plenty of things that we do not understand, and very likely men never can understand, however long they dwell here upon the earth. But there are also some things which the profoundest insight and the universal human heart unite to proclaim to us. The presence of a boundless and inexplicable wisdom at work, in the whole world's life, is one of these things. The clear supremacy of moral values in our own existence is another. Whatever may be true of lower forms of organic life, we ourselves are supremely ruled and judged by a moral law. It is only as moral beings that we have any sort of aim to reach or any destiny to fulfil.

About these things we have no need to feel, and indeed scarcely the least right to feel, that there is any "if" or "perhaps" whatever. They ought to be as solid rock under our feet, which no earthquake tremor even could ever move. And on one other point there should be almost equal fundamental assurance in our hearts. For out of the whole life of our kind comes the assertion that human existence, as a whole, must have some rational meaning, and that this meaning can only be found in a spiritual life continued on into another state of being.

He who once stood bound at Pilate's judgment-seat stood there as a witness to these truths as everlasting and indisputable certainties. They were not things to dream about: they were living facts to be reckoned with at every moment. God, as infinite wisdom and love, was waiting

to take every one of his human children by the hand. The kingdom of heaven, a moral and ethical kingdom, which might be all summed up in the single phrase, "a pure and perfect love," was already present, if men would but open their hearts and let it in. This brief life on earth must be succeeded by another, whose rewards were to be more blessed, as its retributions were like to be more serious, than men were apt to dream. These were the truths he had to proclaim; and because the inference was obvious, that if men would live by them, they had little need for the elaborate ritual which priests had built up, therefore he was put to death.

And yet he still lives here upon this earth, an incalculable power for good among men; while he whose word condemned him to the cross would have passed out of the world's life, like a fleeting shadow, but for his chance connection with that prophet of God's truth. And so that truth will stand while ages come and go. If we tremble for its future, that only shows how little we have caught its spirit and its meaning. None of us, perhaps, can so separate ourselves from our time as not to share somewhat its characteristic doubts and fears. But at least we can believe that he who called himself "God's Son" knew whiereof he spoke; that upon the perfect purity and honesty and simplicity of his soul the great powers of being stamped themselves in a clear and certain image; and that therefore he had a right to declare himself a witness of the truth. We can see and believe that this kind of certainty makes the only foundation of all the knowledge man will ever attain, and take one more warning that, if we would have our intellectual structures stand, we must not build them upon sands.

THE LAST SUPPER.

This do in remembrance of me.—1 COR. xi. 24.

The earliest written account that we have of the last supper of Jesus with his disciples is, presumably, that which is given us in the letters of Saint Paul. That record was made not many years after the event took place; and Paul, in his visits to Jerusalem, had undoubtedly heard the narrative from the lips of some of the twelve who were companions of the Master on that last night of his life. The Gospels in their present form were not written till some years later, perhaps half a century after the death of Christ. To be sure, the best students of these writings are now agreed that the evangelists all used some older document, written in the Aramaic tongue, which has now been altogether lost; and that writing may have been made as early as Paul's Epistles. But of this there is no certainty, and Paul must be regarded as the earliest witness.

There is no great discrepancy in the accounts we get from these different sources; no more than so many different memories would anywhere be likely to show. But the Gospels, with one exception, do not give us these exceedingly interesting words: "Do this in remembrance of me." They must be authentic, however, for in addition to the testimony of Paul, we have the confirmation of the Gospel of Luke. The other writers left them out, and one fancies there is a very good explanation why, to these others, they were of so little interest. Fifty years

after he had left the earth the tendency which finally resulted in the deification of Jesus had already set in, and interest in him as a purely human figure in the world's history had begun to decline. As the evangelists for the most part tell the story, we can see that before their eyes he had begun to be a kind of unearthly being, initiating or instituting a solemn formal rite, designed to be a part of the process of salvation. But as Paul tells the story which he had received from members of the original band of disciples, it is a man among his friends, bidding them a last earthly farewell, and establishing in their minds what comfort he could for the blow so soon to fall upon them.

There never was a more human utterance than this pleading cry: "Do this in remembrance of me!" There is no desire of the human spirit more strongly marked than this yearning to be remembered by those whom one must leave behind, and the parting from whom is harder than all else that we have to face. It seems to me we miss the pathos and the tragedy of Christ's farewell to earth, almost altogether, if we fail to hear in this saying, which was quite as much a prayer as an injunction, the cry of a deeply grieved human soul stretching out hands of affection and saying, "Do not suffer the bond that has held us together so long to be broken!" Whatever, more than we, was the great spirit then about to wing its flight from earth, at least it was entirely human. It must have felt what we feel in such a situation.

Jesus, who came afterward to be called the Christ, on that last night of his life had not only to think of his mission left apparently unfulfilled and hanging in the air. The trial of his faith was not merely that he was asked to face sudden death, while every purpose to which

he had devoted his life remained far short of accomplishment. To die with so much to do, and such inadequate hands into which to commit his cause, was certainly hard enough. But he loved those men who had shared his labors and his journeyings. He had a heart to love, with all the strength of which humanity is capable; and no heart can love without longing for an answering love. "An end has come to all those thrilling experiences through which we have passed together. Never again shall we meet the great crowds looking up to be fed with words of eternal life, or heal the sick, or hold converse together about the Kingdom of Heaven. A band without a master you must henceforth be; and as you walk by the way, or gather in one place when evening falls, my presence will be lacking. But do not forget me. When you break bread together, or pass the cup from hand to hand, think of me. As often as you sit about your common board and partake of the common loaf, do it in remembrance of me."

Something of all this I seem to hear in the Master's tones; for it would be the natural longing of his human spirit, standing upon the very threshold of another world, to be remembered by those who were nearest and dearest to him, when he was no longer with them. But mingled with this, one cannot doubt, there was a very serious purpose. The little ceremony that he enacted, with his injunction to repeat and continue that as a memorial of his death, was designed to accomplish a great end, both for them and for the work which he had undertaken to do. In some way, inexplicable to us, he seemed to know many things which the laboring thought of the world is just beginning to discover after him. He must have divined what a living power their memory of him would become

if they kept it fresh and strong; and that they might live over and over that scene when, for the last time he was with them, he gave them this simple ritual to perform by way of remembrance.

One of the truths which our new psychology begins to insist upon is the very vital part that the past continues to play in a living present, through the faculty of memory. What has been still is, if men do not forget. What memory recalls does not merely lie far off in some perspective of years; it makes a part of the actual experience of the moment, and continually enters into the influences that shape the thought and action then determined. Consider two of the sayings of Jesus to his disciples: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," and "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Set these side by side with the injunction, "Do this in remembrance of me!" and it suggests that he already knew this truth about the function of memory which, by hard effort, our later world is beginning to discover.

We need not fix this as a limit to the meaning of his saying. Very likely the promise, "I am with you alway," meant something more than this. But why should he have taken special pains to keep himself continually in the recollection of his followers, unless he had some purpose which that would serve? And how can we think that his purpose was only the sentimental one of not wishing to be forgotten, when at another time we hear him saying, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I"?

He knew what a power he might continue to be in the hearts of these men, so long as they retained a vivid memory of him; and that he might more surely live in their

minds, he made his last supper with them a kind of ceremonial feast, which they were to observe as a memorial.

For that is what the ordinance of the Lord's Supper rightly is, a service of remembrance. I recall that a good lady, of a form of faith quite different from my own, once said to me that she did not see why we Unitarians held a communion service, or what meaning we could attach to it. I have generally thought it a waste of breath to reply to a remark like this. But I might have told that good lady, had I supposed she would in the least understand what I was saying, that we attached to the service the same meaning that Jesus himself put into it, if his words are to have any reasonable construction. It might be added that such use of the most central rite of the Christian faith accords with one of the greatest and most important laws of our mental being. By remembrance, we bring the past forward into the present, and make it live again in the consciousness which is settling the issues of the world's life here and now. That is not a small matter. It is instead of tremendous advantage to us to get the best there is in the history of our race thus interwoven with our thoughts and feelings, as we deal with the problems and difficulties which the world is ever newly presenting to us.

I would not offer this consideration as a substitute for a different kind of faith; the faith, namely, that where Christian worshippers are, there the Christ himself often comes. On the contrary, I should hold that without such faith our religion had very much lost its hold upon the human mind; for religion is nothing without its spiritual world, and if one has a spiritual world, then, of course, Christ is a living presence there. The Master whom Paul served was not any form of memory living in his

own thought, but one who had spoken to him, as it were from the skies; and who, as he believed and felt, repeatedly visited him to strengthen and direct his way. It is inconceivable that Paul should have established Christianity as the faith of the West, had he not had this feeling about the crucified Jesus, as a living spiritual presence. And, whatever we may think of the means employed to attain this end, we should be blind not to recognize the enormous strength derived by the ancient churches of Christendom from this assurance that Christ himself stands at their altars, giving absolution and new life to those who trust in him.

One can see why this older faith so profoundly distrusts what is trying to shape itself as a modern form of Christianity. To that older faith Christ is not only a great historic example, the perfect man of long ago; and he is something more than the memory of him cherished by his true and loyal followers. He is the present king of heaven, and judge over all the earth. I should agree with the older faith that, if this thought must be wholly given up in the march of progress, then Christianity is doomed. No purely ethical interest is ever going to take the place of that religious passion of the soul which has so much dominated the church of the past. But what is here urged and held up to view as the Christ of memory, is not meant to be a substitute for, but rather a supplement to the faith of the past. After all, though the soul may be greatly heartened and cheered by its belief that the strong Son of God is an actual commanding force over the world's life, that has not much to do, otherwise, with what was the ruling purpose of the mind of Jesus of Nazareth; that is to say, the building up of a kingdom of heaven among men.

One can see that this has been the disadvantage of the Christianity of other days. It has not greatly tended, or has not tended as much as we could wish, to reproduce the mind of Christ in the life of successive generations. It has been too much a calling of him, "Lord! Lord!" while not doing the things that he said. And what we now want is not that men should stop calling him "Lord! Lord!" but that some new kind of faith should be brought to bear, so that belief in him will go on to recreate the world of men in his likeness. That is what it means to remember the man of Nazareth. People may worship the Christ who has been exalted to the right hand of God, and I say nothing against that worship of the apotheosis of a man. Indeed, I believe very much that in some measure or degree it is a vital part of Christianity. But I say the world will never get out of our faith, in this way, what the world so sorely needs; the full effect of the impact of such a life as Jesus lived upon the lower lives of men. His historic example may not be everything, but it is the only power which can make the Christian religion a growing and progressive thing. It is the one force that will couple up, with religious feeling and desire, an ethical idealism, without which religion ceases to be anything of note in the life of this present world.

And I have to confess that this, at the present juncture in the world's affairs, interests me most. Religion, on the whole, is very well able to take care of itself. The world has never been without it, and I think no one need be anxious about its power of continuance through coming time. But religion often tends but little, if any, toward the upbuilding of a kingdom of righteousness and peace on earth. Sometimes, one is inclined to say, it is about the heaviest handicap that forces of progress and

reform have to bear. And to make the Christian religion what it should be, as a herald and messenger of peace and good-will among men, it has to be filled and saturated with remembrance of the earthly life of its Master, as the pattern of what all human life should become. I would not have it cease to care for that divinely radiant figure in human form, which the Christian world has enthroned in the skies above us; but equally with that I would have it cherish the memory of the Prophet of Galilee, who gave us the sublimest example of love and self-sacrifice the world has ever witnessed.

For memory, as we have been saying, does not leave its pictures in that dim and distant past where they originated. It brings them forward and makes them live again in the moment that now is. I have heard men declaim against the folly of going back two thousand years to find some contact with Deity, while God is everywhere about us in the world of to-day. But such men have not understood what memory is and does. Instead of taking me back to the past, it brings that past forward where we are. Take any recollection of our earlier years, and is there any sense of a far journey to get to it? Quite otherwise, the intervening years are as nothing. Practically they have all been abolished. A thousand years, if we had lived them, would be as yesterday when one of childhood's memories was suddenly presented to our consciousness. Through the power of memory we keep the past always with us, so much of it, at least, as we can grasp and hold. It does not trail out behind us, a long chain like the tail of a boy's kite; but all its incidents are made to march abreast of us. We live them over again in the present moment, and only by conscious effort do we put them back into the perspective of past time.

Memory has undoubtedly played a far larger part in the great drama of unfolding life, here upon the earth, than our philosophy and science have thus far commonly recognized. Heredity has been the great word to conjure with, in explaining how mental and physical likenesses have been transmitted from one generation to another. But it is most probable that a considerable portion of what heredity is supposed to have done will ultimately be ascribed to memory. There is, for example, no hereditary link between the successive classes of a great school. But see how school traditions are handed down from class to class, and how a certain school likeness is stamped upon the body of graduates as a whole. Anatomists could never find any physical peculiarity in a bird's throat to account for its peculiar song. So far as physical structure goes, the blackbird should be perfectly able to sing like a nightingale. It must be that the bird learns its song from its parents, and forever produces the tones thus stamped upon its memory. All the later generations of men, no doubt, have been far more powerfully influenced by what their predecessors have put into their memory, than by any tie of blood that has committed them to definite practices and ways. Race hatred is nothing that is born into a man; it is only something that he has learned from the social tradition in which he has been brought up.

This certainly suggests to us that when the world is sufficiently intelligent to deal wisely and understandingly with the problem of what to put into the young mind, the whole aspect of human society may be very swiftly and very considerably changed. What memory has once received it never lets go entirely; and the power it thenceforth manifests to shape life after its pattern often seems like the power of fate. But that power can be used for

good as well as for evil. Beautiful and tender memories are as persistent and have as much sway over us as recollections that are forbidding and bad. In fact, our experience teaches us that the good in our memory is more lasting than the evil; and that gives this faculty an office of vast significance, by way of sifting out for us life's higher values and setting them in the supreme place where they belong.

If you should happen to possess a rather careful and minute diary of a longish bit of travel once undertaken by you, and after the lapse of some years were to compare your recollections of that journey with the written record, you would find that, on the whole, its more disagreeable features had tended to fade from your mind and its more interesting moments had come to stand out, like mountain peaks above a sea of mist. That is a hint of the habit of memory, which enables it to perform for us an inestimable service. We often say that human nature has a tendency to idealize the friends it has lost. It may not have seemed to care for them so much while living, but they become saints and heroes when they are dead. What has happened is this: when their presence can only be presented to us through memory, a multitude of petty details about their persons and conduct soon drops altogether out of sight, and the greater things in their character emerge clearly and singly into view. It is like getting up high enough so that your sight of a mountain is no longer confused by the foot-hills which partly obstruct the view, but the great central peak itself stands clear before the eye.

And this gives to memory a priceless advantage in presenting to us an image of what human life truly is, and what it is for. We have our heroes and our heroines

among people now living; but their greater qualities cannot show so well amid the dust and conflict of the life surrounding them. A man like Lincoln while he lived was a hero only to part of the world which saw him looming large through the smoke and flame that hid him from the sight of others. But, dying, he became everybody's hero, because in the clear light of memory everybody could see the essential greatness of his heart and mind.

Among all primitive forms of religion, none other has interested me so much as that of ancestor worship. One can but think that this pious veneration and remembrance of those who had gone before was an influence of great good wherever it was practised. It was not that common men and women were thereby transformed out of their proper likeness into a moral excellence which they did not possess. It was that the good in them began to have its proper value and effect, as the smaller accidents of existence fell away and memory could seize upon what was worthy of the heart's respect and adoration. Ancestor worship, one is glad to believe, still survives and will always survive so long as men remember. It may have no recognized body of rites and ceremonies, but the spirit of it is a very real part of our religion to-day.

Who, for example, can think of the love of his own mother without realizing that it is the greatest and most blessed thing that ever touched his life; and when that love has gone on into another world before us, how can he help bowing his heart in worship before that image of holiness, feeling it as his best link with the deeps of infinity! It is a great thing for men thus to have the moral beauty and perfection that they have known, appealing to them through the power of memory; and appealing to

them all the more because memory selects those qualities out of the confused medley of experience, for special prominence and emphasis. What would happen to our world, confronted as it is by innumerable temptations and possessing for the most part only that imperfect kind of intelligence which rejoices to make the worse appear the better cause, did not the past appear so imperiously in its living consciousness, pointing to some duty needing to be done and saying in a voice of command not to be lightly ignored, "Do this in remembrance of me!"

And if instead of giving such grudging obedience to that voice as we cannot choose but yield, if instead of going our own way except when we are forced to let the past direct our steps, we made a point of choosing out the best that memory can present us to, and of cultivating association with that, day by day, what a much better world this might soon become! Suppose, for instance, this nation were really to imbue itself with the spirit of the fathers of the republic,—that very remarkable group of men, the like of which does not appear more than once in many generations,—what a difference it would make in our ability to handle wisely the national questions of our own day!

We do not, we cannot altogether forget. We cannot entirely escape the hand of influence which strong personalities in the past have laid upon us. We still are swayed, doubtless more than we know, by those who have been near and dear to us, and who, being dead, yet speak to us. The great Christian world, however unchristian its conduct may be, is still somewhat under the dominion of that mighty spirit who called the church into being, and in many ways must submit to him as its lawgiver and king. But how different it might all be if this world

made constant effort to keep in touch with such directing agencies; if we thought more often of the pure eyes looking down upon us from the skies; if we sought daily companionship in spirit with the good and great; if the followers of Christ kept the picture of their Master continually in their hearts, with a prayer to be made like him!

It is not only this one voice that comes down to us across the ages saying, "This do in remembrance of me!" The wondrous past, out of which we are sprung, calls us in numberless ways to be worthy the example it has given us. *Noblesse oblige.* The meanest of earth are children and heirs of a magnificent spiritual line. For all of us Christ died. For the whole family of man blood has been poured out like water, with a courage and devotion that can only move us to amazement and awe. All this we ought to remember every day and hour we live; and, remembering, we are slowly schooling our weak hearts to wear the same breastplate of righteousness, the same whole armor of God.

FEAR AND HOPE.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.—
ROMANS xv. 13.

When one considers the situation of the world at the present time, there is something particularly ungracious in those attacks which representatives of the older forms of religion are continually making upon the more modern types of faith. The Roman Catholic hails every sign of weakness in Protestantism with unconcealed satisfaction. He views the whole Protestant movement with a rancor that has been but little mitigated during the years of toleration through which the two forms of Christianity have lived side by side. If he could, doubtless, he would sweep away the whole Protestant Church as an entirely useless and incompetent concern.

And the older branches of Protestantism are scarcely less intolerant in their attitude toward Christian organizations which they lump together and brand with the opprobrious name of "dissent." They manifest hardly the slightest disposition to understand these later developments of Christian history. The attempt of such independent bodies to maintain their separate life is looked upon as a piece of gratuitous folly, and some of the tactics adopted to discourage their continued existence betray a somewhat inadequate sense of what common courtesy and decency require. This, I say, when one sees what the situation of the world truly is, looks like the meanest kind of treachery. It is as if an army in battle array

should take to firing upon its own line of skirmishers, sent out to find in what direction its advance can most hopefully be made.

Of course, it is to be said that they who do this do it in ignorance. They do not understand that these are friends, performing a friendly service in which their own safety is deeply concerned. They know only that there is an enemy somewhere in that direction, and, seeing these detached figures, they take them to be the foe at whom they should aim. But they ought to know better. At least, their leaders have small excuse for such blindness. These leaders might have as much courage as the Jewish rabbi, Gamaliel, had when he said to the council, "Let these men alone: if this work be of men, it will come to nought; if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." When they sanction the attacks made upon all newer forms of faith, they manifest either incredible folly or base ingratitude.

For the general situation now is that the motive of fear, which has long contributed to the strength of religious organizations, is everywhere failing, and failing very fast in civilized lands. If the Church is to hold anything like its former strength in days to come, some new motive power must be found to take the place of that which is passing away; and it is the search for that new incentive on which the more modern types of Christian faith are now chiefly engaged.

Religion has lived in the past, not exclusively, of course, but still to large extent, on the fears of mankind. Can there be any doubt of the truth of that statement? The smallest knowledge of the general character of religious history would seem to be enough to support the charge. Religion would indeed be not only a stupid, but a very

demoralizing thing if its main spring in the mind were nothing but fear. But the interest of the common mind in religious ceremonial and discipline has been in all ages vastly stimulated by its terrors in view of the possibilities of the unseen.

Not only is this true in savage and so-called heathen lands, but Christianity itself has flourished and grown great in large measure out of that same root. The fear of divine anger and of future punishment has kept thousands and millions of men reasonably faithful to the performance of what was set before them as their religious duties, when, without that dread upon them, they would have scorned the Church, with all its works and ways.

If there were any doubt about this, the attitude of ecclesiastical authorities themselves toward those who attack ancient forms of terror should be conclusive. Not for one moment do they willingly listen to suggestions that the threat of woe and destruction is any less imminent than has been heretofore believed. They know that they have not the same hold upon the world if they cannot in the same degree appeal to humanity's fears. Some years since it was put in a graphic way when it was said that the doctrine of "probation after death," one of the mild heresies of that day, "cut the nerve of foreign missions." That is to say, if there was the least chance that the unconverted here might find means of salvation hereafter, efforts on their behalf must of necessity slacken and decline,—a prophecy, by the way, which has not been fulfilled.

But, indeed, the Church for many centuries has so openly, so avowedly, and so deliberately set itself to make spiritual capital out of those fears, many of which it had itself studiously instilled into the mind, that everybody

must know what part that passion has played, and does still play, in the maintenance of religious institutions. And now the world has arrived at a point where this foundation is crumbling so rapidly that its entire destruction would seem to be only a question of time. There is much in life, it is true, of which the most enlightened man still knows that he has reason to be afraid. But he no longer looks to religion to deliver him from such anxiety. Time was when an eclipse of the sun or moon was a portent of fearful disaster, and when the people resorted to their churches and their priests for deliverance. The change which has given us to understand that an eclipse is a perfectly natural and harmless phenomenon, and that therefore we need no supernatural defence against it, is typical of the entire deliverance of the modern man from bondage to all fears which would lead him to invoke the aid of the Church. He can get on without it, and he knows that he can get on without it. He is no longer afraid of any prince of evil spirits lying in wait to entrap him or of any other malignant influence which such a power might set in motion; and he does not believe in a Deity who would be capable of doing him an injury in retaliation for his neglect to pay the customary rites of worship.

The once common idea that, if people did not show formal honor to their Maker, he might blast their crops or send sickness upon them or fail to ward off some approaching disaster, strikes the modern man as a piece of unspeakable blasphemy. People may say that God is good and just, but, when they ascribe such acts to him, they show that their religion is only a thinly disguised form of devil-worship after all.

Let me say again, and with emphasis, that not for one instant would I seem to imply that all popular religion is,

or has been, altogether of this stamp. But I say that a great deal of interest in that kind of religious belief and practice has been mingled with popular faith. And many ecclesiastical authorities have not only known this, but have been entirely willing to have it so, because it very much simplified their problem of supporting and directing religious institutions. And now I say they are, more and more, being deprived of this help. It is no longer so easy to scare men into such behavior as they can approve.

The weakening of the hold of the Church means chiefly that the world is getting rid of those fears which have been so much played upon throughout the past. And this is now no revolt of a small cultivated class, which the upholders of popular religion can afford to ignore. It is the spirit of what we have come to call science which is making this change; and that spirit is going everywhere, into the most guarded enclosures and the humblest homes. It will be all in vain in the end for the old-fashioned religionist to have his separate schools where what he is pleased to name infidelity cannot enter. He is bound to teach a certain amount of science in his schools, and there is no way by which he can prevent that teaching from gradually undermining and displacing the superstitious terrors that have given religion much of its seeming strength. He may somewhat check that process, but he cannot possibly stop it.

It is as plainly written on the face of things as anything can be that the new knowledge which has come into the world will spread everywhere at length, and that, wherever it goes, the reign of fear is ended. If that should mean the downfall of religion, then down religion would have to go, and there would be no help for it. It undoubtedly does mean loss of power for the time being, in so far as

the Church has depended upon man's fear of the unseen to bring him to its support; and the question is what, if any, motive can be discovered to take the place of that which is passing away. This is the problem to which, as it seems to me, the newer forms of Christian faith have devoted themselves, and it is only as they succeed in establishing religion on a basis with which fear has nothing to do that it can be saved from being ultimately discredited and repudiated by the whole race of men.

The liberal of this present time is fighting the battle of the whole Christian Church, though he has to bear the reproach of having caused the very weakness that he is trying to remedy. The older faiths turn upon him as if he were responsible for the weakening of their influence over the common mind. But that is a matter with which he has had little to do. He does not need to spend the smallest fraction of his time trying to discredit ancient beliefs. That process goes on in the natural course of things, only too fast for the hopes and wishes of one who is interested in some kind of reconstruction of Christian faith. The great problem of this present day is to find some way by which religion can live when it is deprived of its old alliance with fear; and the glee of those churchmen who see that present-day religion is having a somewhat hard time working out that problem is inconceivably stupid; because it is only a question of a little time when they are going to be face to face with that same problem themselves. It is as if, on the shore of a wide river which everybody must cross, those who are not proposing to cross till to-morrow should take to reviling those who are struggling with the current to-day.

The time is upon us when sensible people are no longer going to church because they are afraid of what the con-

sequences may be if they do not go to church. And there is but one possible way by which the appeal of the Church can be so altered as to continue to hold the attention of mankind, which is that, as fear declines, the power of hope must be correspondingly increased. The two motives of course exist in all religion. Fear is in itself such a debasing and demoralizing thing that, when there is no great hope to sweeten and correct its influence, religion soon sinks to contemptible depths of superstition. But, as an organized institution of human life, religion has hitherto ruled very largely by the aid of fear; and, as that weapon is taken out of its hand, its only resource is to depend, more and more, upon its capacity to kindle the power of hope.

The very weakness of modern types of Christian faith shows by how sure an instinct they are trying to meet that necessity, how hard their endeavor is so to adapt themselves to the conditions of this new age that they may carry forward the life of the past into the different world of coming time. For what one feels about the liberalism of the day, in religion, is its constant tendency to be betrayed into a certain softness, not to say mushiness, of thought and feeling about the great problems of our being. Life remains a very stern and serious affair, and no amiable sentimentalism is ever likely to be able to cope with its hard situations.

Every now and again a longing arises within us to bring people back to a sense of the fight they have to make for higher things, and of the fearful perils amid which they walk, too often with their heads in some cloud-land of fanciful conjecture. Modern thought shows a disposition to run off into kinds of optimism which seem to give but little sustenance to the moral fibre of the

soul, seeming too much to imply that, in the language of one of our good old hymns, we are all to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," and that, if we wait a little, all the supposed tragedy of existence will turn out a pleasing comedy.

But does not this very weakness indicate that the mind of our time has set its face in the right direction, and given itself to a ruling purpose chosen for it by the necessity of its situation? What we want, above everything else, is more and better hope. The world is getting so far grown up that old bogies can no longer be profitably used to frighten it into good conduct, and what we have to do is to set before it a hope great enough to fire its heart with high courage and endeavor. That is what modern thought is after,—to get away from despairing or half-despairing views of human nature and human destiny, and to establish instead some radiant vision of the future, for whose fulfilment men will do and dare more than ever they would undertake under the impulse of fear.

We have a right to believe that this is possible; that under proper conditions even the very ordinary mind can have all its fear turned into hope; and that, when religion ceases to be a means of escape from impending calamity, it may become a way of approach to spiritual riches of unexampled splendor and worth. The more we learn of Christianity in its first beginnings, the more certain it becomes that it was originally a great movement of hope. Men and women were drawn into it not so much for safety from imaginary terrors, but to realize an enormous good, suddenly opened to them, as the supreme possibility of their being. They did not embrace what was then a new faith, as one would creep

into an ark to escape the approaching flood, but more as one would embark on a ship which was soon to land him on a new shore, where fame and fortune could be had almost for the asking.

What the first Christians took out into the world to preach was called a gospel,—a proclamation of good news; and what they produced by their preaching was an immense and swelling tide of hope, that rolled far before its energy began to fail. Why should not that episode repeat itself in the world's life? Why should not Christianity itself, returning to the fount from which it first came, cast off the gloom and terror which it has taken on from alien sources, and fill itself once more with that youthful spirit of triumphant hope in which its early victories were won?

What must it learn to believe and what disbelieve, in order that such a change may be brought to pass? For one thing, it must learn to take its thought of the character of the Ruler of this universe from the lips of Christ himself, not from the speculations of later theologians, who spoke as if they had never read or heard of the teachings of the New Testament. That idea of a Deity who must have his pound of flesh before his bond against a defaulting humanity could be discharged, and who, therefore, could not forgive any of his children till the suffering of Christ had satisfied his sense of justice, is so opposed to the whole tenor of Christ's sayings that it is difficult to understand how men, with that record before them, could have held such belief. The conception of the moral character of God which this involves is absolutely unchristian.

It is a depressing and despairing view, because, though it opens a way of escape from eternal woe for a portion

of mankind, it puts upon the throne of the universe a power under which it is impossible to develop any great amount of joyous hope. A divine government of that kind is not one to inspire much eager anticipation of what an alliance between God and man can effect. First of all, that unworthy idea of the character of God has to be unlearned,—is being unlearned with great rapidity. For, even in churches where the whole structure of public worship is built upon it, very often now the idea itself has little force.

It is, however, no great thing to be delivered from that unchristian belief unless we can grow into that circle of ideas embodied in the teaching of Christ which make a spring of unbounded hope. Merely to say, "After all, there is nothing to be afraid of," and then to fall into a state of dull apathy regarding the higher issues of our existence, is a most ignominious enfranchisement. Jesus himself, who taught the love and fatherhood of God, saw something before him for whose sake he was willing to go to the cross. His immediate followers were also inspired for the most heroic labors and sacrifices, and without doubt every one of them, like their Master, endured martyrdom at last. As one of them wrote, "It was for the hope set before him that Christ endured the cross, despising the shame, and was set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

And here, I am sure, we have revealed to us the secret of that unrest which fills the Church of our day, the aim of those newer movements of Christian thought that have gone apart from old-established lines of tradition, and which old religious authorities are foolishly trying to suppress. What the heart of the world is yearning for is this larger hope, that once more it may be filled with

such joy and peace in believing as have been manifested by the great exemplars of Christian faith. To put the world upon the track of finding that hope, some of us are willing to bear the reproach of heresy, and we do not see where we could perform a better service.

I am very conscious that we have thus come only to the threshold of the sermon that ought to be preached from the words we have taken as a text. What we should now try to do is to expound something of that dawning hope beginning to stir in the hearts of masses of men, and to give it sufficient definiteness of form so that, in our own minds at least, it may not spend itself in false directions or fail because its end is not immediately reached. A vast deal of hope in this our day does seem to be going to waste because it is foolishly directed, and a great deal is too easily discouraged by temporary defeat.

But just now and here we have only time to insist that, whatever penalty there may be to pay and into whatever strange company we may be thrown, it is better to keep on the hopeful side. When some new impulse comes into the world's life, many of its earlier movements and manifestations will be very extravagant and uncouth. But not for that should we be frightened back into a régime whose career is virtually over. Let us say to ourselves that the day of fear is over. A good deal of it is still left wrought into that inner texture of man's being which no access of knowledge can immediately change. But the time for being afraid of the God who created us is over and done. The time has come to perceive that what Jesus Christ wanted of his followers was such love and trust toward the Father in heaven as would leave in their hearts not one shred of anxious

terror concerning the Giver of their good. They might well be afraid of sin and evil, but they must not be afraid of the infinite bounty by which they were fed, and they must find their union with God through an expectation of everlasting beauty and blessedness.

Let us be sure that as between belief in God as a terrible being, whom it is death to offend, and belief in Him as a God of hope, who rules by the power of His eternal love, the stream of our life runs in this latter course. That certainly is to set our faces toward the new dawn of a rising day. Let us not be afraid of believing too much or of consorting with others who cherish unreasonable expectations. On the whole, we, and all men, are to be saved by hope. We shall not have too much of it, nor are we likely to be made ashamed by our too fond imaginings, when we come where the inner wonders of God's great universe can be disclosed to us.

THOUGHT AND FEELING.

He that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it.—MATT. xiii. 23.

In the parable of the sower it is said that some seed fell on stony ground, where there was but little earth; and afterward, because it had not much root, it withered away. But some seed fell on good ground, where it brought forth, in places, even an hundred-fold increase. In the comment made upon the parable, in response to further questioning by the disciples, it appears that the difference between the stony ground and the good ground consists in the understanding of the word that is preached. Three kinds of soil are specified: that which has no depth; that which is capable of sustaining a strong growth, but is already possessed by rank and lusty weeds; and that which to good quality joins the advantage of being free from thorns. The sower of the word has these three kinds of human nature to think of. There is the shallow kind where the higher life does not obtain sufficient root. There is the deep kind, in which another sort of growth is so well established that the word of the spirit gets no real chance. There is also the deep kind so well cleared of other competing forms of life that the good seed finds adequate opportunity to show what harvest it can produce.

He, then, who would improve the life of the world, granted that he is already confident of the excellence of

the seed he desires to plant, has two main problems to face. He must find a soil of human nature deep enough and rich enough to sustain the growth he hopes to produce; and he must find that ground not too hopelessly pre-empted by ideas and passions that are hostile to his word of truth. In any case he must have good ground, in order to get a return for his labor, and perhaps it may surprise us a little to be told in the gospel that what constitutes this good ground is intelligence. We might rather expect, perhaps, that all the emphasis would be there laid on moral qualities. But this saying, at all events, is clear and explicit: "He that receiveth the seed into good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it." The stony ground, we are left to infer, is that which is deficient in intelligence. First of all, what human nature, as we commonly know it, wants, in order to be made capable of higher things, is, in effect, education, or those intellectual capacities which education is supposed to produce.

This presupposes, of course, that there is good seed to be sown, when the ground is prepared; and it still leaves us face to face with the other and perhaps harder difficulty, what to do about the thorns. There is some reason to think that, for immediate purposes, this latter is rather the most important branch of our spiritual husbandry. We appear to have good seed, and there seems to be a great deal of very excellent ground. But that ground at present is, to large extent, such a perfect jungle of older growths, it is so much like the worst kind of "unweeded garden," of which it is to be said that "things rank and gross possess it merely," as to make us half despair of ever seeing it brought under a good degree of Christian cultivation. So far, at least,

as outward peace and order in our worldly affairs are concerned, the great task, I think, is to Christianize the world's intellect. Now, and always, that power is likely to be in command of the situation, whatever rebellions may arise against it. And that is good ground in which to sow the seed of the gospel,—none better, if it were not for the thorns! They are, however, so abundant and so strong that the worldly-wise have all the appearance of reason on their side, when they smile forbearingly upon the idealist, and tell him that he is engaged in a perfectly hopeless fight.

But the parable of the sower suggests to us that the other part of our world-problem is also, to considerable extent, a problem of the intellect. Where the ground is good,—that is to say, where intellect is strong,—the task is to get it cleared of weeds. Where the ground is not good, the element that mostly needs to be supplied is that of intelligence. First of all, if the word is to fructify to good purpose in human hearts, men must be able to understand it.

Take it altogether, this is not such a bad world. It has bad elements and bad features, but these have been greatly exaggerated in the theologies of the past. Humanity is not so utterly wrong at heart as it is often represented to be. It does seem to me, however, at times an almost insufferably stupid world. Its capacity for blundering appears to be phenomenal; and its refusal to see the open door to its path of progress, where it ought to enter and where it will have to enter in the end, is only to be paralleled by the behavior of some of the lower animals. Our human world does need tremendously to get understanding; and, though many good men and religious men are now disposed to heap scorn upon the intellect

as a faculty of secondary consequence, it is difficult to see how much gain is to be made, apart from the growth of intellectual power.

Few things are more to be desired than some better understanding of the place which intellect holds in our higher life. What do we mean, for example, by "reason in religion," and what office has reason to perform in things pertaining to the kingdom of the heart? What do we want reason to do, and what not to do, when it comes into the place where religion bows in worship or pours itself out in supplication?

Two great powers of our life are thought and feeling, but so far are we from the kingdom of heaven that we have not yet well harmonized these two great forces by which we continually live. Men are forever dividing into hostile camps, one having "reason" and the other "emotion" written upon its banners. Here stands the Puritan, profoundly distrustful of feeling of every kind, ashamed to show emotion on any occasion, and making a virtue of his stern repression of all life's natural sentiments. To understand him, we must see, of course, against what reckless and ruinous extravagances he was reacting. But, with all our sympathy for him, we have to say that he made of life a somewhat fearful thing, and fastened upon his children, for many generations, an unfortunate inheritance. It seems almost incredible that people should ever have been so fearful of the sentiment of beauty as to close their eyes, deliberately, to the loveliness of flowers. Yet there is excellent evidence that this is what the early Quakers did. For successive generations the Puritanic type of Christian did his best to drive many natural feelings altogether out of his heart. He walked by his belief,

his uncompromising logic, what to him was reason in religion; and he would have none of that sentimentalism which had filled the world with idolatry. It was a most unhappy extreme to which he went, for it has made his children painfully shy about the expression of even their most innocent and tender feelings; and to this day a riotous excess is able to shield itself somewhat from the restraint that ought to be imposed upon it by crying out that it is being oppressed by "Puritanism."

On the other hand, the one justification of the Puritanic régime was the wildness and wickedness into which the world had run, seeking gratification for its emotional impulses. It had become like a drunkard for whom no other cure but total abstinence can be prescribed. One might say that it lived for no other purpose than to indulge whatever feeling happened to be uppermost in its mind. It cared little or nothing either for duty or for truth, when it was a question of following some emotional whim. The age which produced the Puritan was an age when the ordinary man of the world followed the pursuit of pleasure wherever it might take him. Falsehood, robbery, oppression, the wreck of human lives,—none of these things stood much in his way when some pleasurable emotion beckoned him on. Society, in many respects, had fallen into a most deplorable state, as it always will, when the feelings of the heart are left to run wild, without intelligent supervision and control.

At this present the life of our people tends so much in that direction as to justify some disquiet lest something like another Puritan reaction may be the inevitable result. Once more we are hearing far too much about "art for art's own sake," which means, being inter-

preted, that reason and conscience have no business to sit in judgment on the æsthetic sense. No really great artist ever taught that abominable doctrine, but among people of somewhat lawless disposition it easily becomes a dangerous heresy.

The truth is that, while emotion is the thing for which we chiefly live and feeling is the motive power that drives the world, that great force is never to be safely trusted, apart from the guiding hand of intelligence. Take feeling at its highest and best, where it expresses itself through a sense of values, and even there it needs the criticism which intellect alone can give. When we say that anything seems to us valuable or worth while, that is, in the last resort, a judgment of pure feeling, from which there is no appeal. But even there, when we decide, by our feeling, that "love is the greatest thing in the world," or that reverence is one of the noblest qualities of human nature, we need to let these feelings stand sometimes at the tribunal of reason, and seek those sanctions which the dispassionate intelligence has to pronounce. Much more, when it comes to those powerful currents of emotion by which the popular mind is chiefly swayed, there is no safety for us, save as these tremendous energies, which make both for evil and for good, are brought somewhat under the guidance of reason and common sense. Not even religion can be trusted, where there is no sufficient intellectual capacity to direct wisely those mighty emotions of which it is the spring. We must insist upon reason in the Church, and upon some scrupulous adherence there to standards of truth, because, once that is broken down, there is no adequate safeguard against an irresponsible æstheticism or fanaticism, which is sure to drag the very name

of religion, at last, into the mire of unreason and immorality.

At the present time there is much debate about "religion and education." Our common schools are said to be godless. A large section of the Catholic Church is committed to active hostility against our methods of instruction, because, it is said, they leave the child's religious nature out of account. They sharpen the intelligence, but they do not strengthen moral and spiritual powers. Now it is truly deplorable that in the present state of the religious world, with us, owing to sectarian rivalries and jealousies, it is a matter of such great difficulty to have any religious instruction in our schools. But it seems to me that no judicious mind should be in doubt as to what main course to pursue. First and foremost, the world must have a better intelligence. If a little knowledge proves to be a dangerous thing, then the only remedy to apply is more knowledge. If education has gone only far enough to make the common mind sceptical, irreverent, and vain, then carry it further, till it can rediscover the reasons which underlie the moral and religious life.

Especially is that Church short-sighted which says, by its action, that it will not trust itself to a future where the pursuit of knowledge is untrammelled, but must have young minds biassed in its favor, before they come to maturity, in order that it may hold its own with other competing forms of organized religion.

The parochial school is a confession of that feeling of insecurity which pervades mediæval institutions as they stand face to face with the conditions of the modern world. They dare not abide the judgment of an unfettered mind. That school is also evidence enough of

an institution which is losing its place in the world's life. The great boast of the Church has been, for many centuries, its adaptability to the various conditions among which it has found itself. It has had that power which biologists now tell us all successful life must have of adjusting itself to its environment. But, in so far as Catholicism now finds itself unable to take on the ideals of the modern world, it confesses that it has begun to lose that power. In refusing to join with us to follow wherever the light of new truth shall lead the way, it sets itself against a movement which, in the end, it will be unable to resist.

Whatever happens meanwhile or incidentally and by the way, the goal toward which life now presses forward is that of a broader and more adequate intelligence. It seems to have heard and believed the counsel that the only good ground for planting the seed of a higher life is that which can understand the word, when preached to it. Deeper than all those conscious theories by which we try to shape a course for the good of mankind, there appears to be at the heart of our modern life a mighty impulse toward enlightenment and a mighty hunger for knowledge. That this will easily sustain and carry forward the efforts now being made, through educative processes, to strengthen and broaden the knowledge of the common people everywhere, I have not one instant's doubt.

The religionist may cry out that schools are godless, and the aristocrat may complain that people of small minds are being educated out of all proper usefulness. But the great process will go on just the same, as, on the whole, it ought to go on, whatever unhappy incidents may attend it. What cannot stand the light of

a larger knowledge will be obliged in the end to get out of the way; and even enterprises of weight and moment may be for the time being brought to a partial halt, so that they have to await their future opportunity. What the world must have, at any cost, is a better and clearer intelligence. It must have this, because nothing else can control those passions of the human heart out of which storms arise that ravage the earth, and because the word of spiritual truth demands a certain understanding before it can take root in the heart.

We shall get no assured relief from outbreaks of war till there is enough reason in the minds of men to hold in check those national and racial animosities which continually threaten our peace. Even those countries which stand foremost in the work of education are still subject to waves of passion which may at any moment sweep them into war. The moral sense, unaided, cannot hold them back. No peace tribunal which we are likely to get can deal with an aggravated case of national resentment. To get rid of war, we must have a rule of reason, in the common mind, strong enough to govern those fits of anger in which a whole population may be involved. This is an indication of the significance of the great and sacred cause of popular education, which, in the State that our fathers planned, went hand in hand with the welfare of the Church.

Indeed, the Church itself must wait for that ground to be prepared, since its best work cannot be done in an ignorant community; and, where it attempts to set limits to freedom of thought, it destroys its own opportunity to produce a good spiritual harvest.

Fundamental to our higher life as the feelings of the heart are, they do not lift the world out of the dust,

save as they work in alliance with increasing knowledge. And, on the whole, these feelings are much more likely to persist in the world's life, even without much cultivation, than are intellectual faculties, when education stops.

Though there is undoubtedly some ground for that dread of "intellectualism," to which fear scholars of note have lent the weight of their influence, yet I should hold that the chief danger was in quite another direction. Of all improbable happenings, is it not most impossible that thought should ever kill feeling, on any wide scale? The picture of the philosopher which some have painted, as of a man whose whole emotional nature has atrophied till he has lost the power to feel as other men feel, is nothing but a caricature. The Puritan tried to make himself over on some such pattern, and dismally failed. He could not so far unmake his own manhood as to silence those emotions which are the first manifestations of our human consciousness, springing out of the deep founts of being.

What happens among cultivated people is that the power of feeling becomes a finer and more spiritual thing. It is as when the primary current of electricity (which often rises to a deadly volume) is turned into that gentler induced current by which we are now enabled to talk across the continent. Where society has been subjected to many generations of culture, the people are often said to be cold. It is thought that the warm and quick emotion to be found in more primitive communities has died out of their lives. But it is not so. Get close to the heart of the man of intellect, and you will find it throbbing with those same emotions which move every human breast. These things are not to be destroyed in

any normal man. He may be made ashamed of his feelings. He may grow self-conscious, and try to hide them from the gaze of others. But he must become positively inhuman before he can cease to feel what you and I must feel, as we meet the pains and pleasures, the joys and sorrows, that lie in our common lot.

What the philosopher has gained is the power to order his emotion in terms of reason, to subdue his passion to reasonable bounds. And, in the large way, it may be said that this is life's whole task. We come into this world, not rational beings, but creatures of feeling and emotion. And how beautiful is the play of this exquisite emotional life in the mind of a child! If only we could remain children, what better fate could we ask! But childhood is inevitably lost, and the whole purport of our mysterious quest thenceforward seems to be to regain our childhood on some higher plane. The child's feelings grow till they become the dominating passions of the man; and then existence turns, for him, on the question whether they shall drive him where they list or he shall overcome them, and hold them to their proper bounds.

It is no easy contest to which the soul of man is thus committed; and any person who sees and feels the tragic intensity to which it often rises will have something of that boundless charity which filled the heart of Christ. This is a field of conflict on which any man may be proud to have won even a small and modest triumph. To be able to say to that surging tide of feeling which threatens to roll over us, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," is a godlike thing; and he who can thus make the winds and the seas of the mind obey him may think that he has

approved himself a child of God, whether the world may smile or frown.

And, when the human will and reason have thus tamed the wild powers given them to subdue, then begins the fulfilment of that saying that the kingdom of God is for those who receive it as a little child. That struggle once ended in victory, anger, hate, appetite, sorrow, rebellion, whatever it may be, being brought down to limits which it may not overpass, then should begin again something of a child's happy and trustful life, full of kindly feeling and unfading hope.

It is the man unable to master his grief who cannot speak of it, but keeps it eating at his heart, like a smothered fire. He who has conquered makes even his sorrow as a beautiful and holy shrine, in whose shade he often loves to linger. There is nothing lovelier, in heaven or on the earth, than the sweet serenity of a soul which is thus master of its own peace; and I know not where we might better look, to find a life-task well fulfilled, than on him who has learned thus to rule the province of his own heart. That is what I judge the world to be for,—that these personalities of ours may come into being, and be trained for a new life elsewhere. And what can that training ask of us more than that we should learn to hold the key of our destiny in our own hands; that we should cease to be blown about by all the winds that assail our way, and should be able steadily to hold our course, in patience and faith, toward that heavenly country which the Christian knows as the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM.

He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side.—Ps. i. 3 (*Prayer Book Version*).

A wonderful thing is a tree, and not unfit to serve, as it often has been used, for a symbol of the best human life. The lofty pine, the sturdy and spreading oak, the cedars of Lebanon, the humbler olive, and even the fruitful vine have been frequently employed to illustrate some feature of the life of men. There appears to be a special affinity between ourselves and trees, so that the wanton destruction of them impresses us as being worse than a blunder, approaching the proportions of something like a crime. A traveller, whose entertaining book I once read, was so enraged by the ruin of many noble forests that he could only refer to man as the “tree-destroying animal,” and undoubtedly, where countries have been stripped well-nigh bare of this larger vegetation, that spoliation has had much to do with the descent of such lands into comparative barrenness and poverty. The tree is one of our best friends, and out of our relations with it grows a kind of kinship of spirit, which enables us, partly, to see ourselves in its likeness. Much of the mythology of olden days seems very far away from us; but it is not so difficult to imagine spirits in trees, or to invest the sounds that they give forth, when the wind stirs their branches, with articulate meanings. Who does not know trees that are to him like an old and valued

acquaintance, and to which he can almost ascribe personal character? What a tragedy is the death of such a tree! and what a mournful kind of interest there is where sentinel elms still stand watching above the site of a long-vanished habitation, as if faithful to the memory of the buried hearthstone which they were planted to shade and protect!

"He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side." What more beautiful simile of the good and faithful and fruitful human life! We sometimes speak of the "river of life," and that answers very well to express our sense of a gathering and growing volume, rolling on through long tracts of time; but frequently we wish to express the opposite feeling,—that of a mighty tide branching into smaller and smaller subdivisions,—and for this purpose we naturally speak of the "tree of life." In all religious poetry, perhaps, there is no more impressive piece of symbolism than that for which we are indebted to the Book of Revelation, and which places in the midst of the celestial city, beside the ever-flowing river, a "tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations."

And these poetic meanings, I am disposed to think, can be translated into some very practical and important lessons. From the study of trees we can learn some things about ourselves which may not be quite so obvious till we see them thus reflected. In the age-long discussion concerning individualism and collectivism, which just now has reached rather an acute stage, there is much light to be had in what everybody knows to be true about trees. An age-long discussion, I said, because in every generation there has to be much the same contest between social forces and the power of individual liberty. That is the always unsolved problem, save as some kind of

temporary balance is worked out under existing conditions. Always there are apostles of what we now call socialism, and always their schemes are partially blocked by those who stand for a larger individualism.

Just at this present, not being very well satisfied with what has resulted from allowing individual plans and ambitions to have free play, the world has quite largely gone over to one or another plan for socialistic reform, and many suppose that they have thus found a whole new gospel, never proclaimed before. In their ardor for this new discovery of theirs they are always pointing out to us that society is practically everything, and the individual practically nothing. All that we have and all that we are, it is said, we owe to the society of which we make a part. No person, by himself, could come to anything. He could have no language, no knowledge, no training, no opportunity. All his powers, in isolation, would remain latent and undeveloped. Therefore, we are told, society is the great affair. Our social life is the important reality. What any one person thinks or feels or is, even though he be accounted great, is of slight moment. It is what the multitude think and feel that really counts, for out of their teeming life must come our whole store of human good.

Now it is on just this point, I think, that we can learn something from trees. Where many of them stand together, they make a kind of society, which we call a forest. And nothing is better known than that, broadly speaking, there are forests of two kinds,—one of them profitable and majestic, a source of repose and delight to all who enter its shade; the other useless, valueless, and merely horrible,—a refuge for every unclean and venomous thing that lives.

Let us walk through the aisles of some tree-clad tract, such as many a favored land can boast, one which is apt to be known in every place as a "cathedral wood"; and what solemn beauty is there, which no architect could ever yet get into his creations of stone! He may have what he calls a "forest of columns"; but his best of that kind is so small in comparison with nature's spaciousness that his art is only a feeble imitation. And what peace, in every season, haunts this forest solitude! When winter gales rage overhead, how gently the snow sifts through the interlacing branches of that forest roof! When the noon-tide glare is all but intolerable over the panting fields, under its shelter that is all subdued to a delicious, languorous calm. Man's cathedral never escapes from being something of a vault; but, nature's cathedral is sweet and fresh, full of pleasant odors and a healing balm. If all human society could be like this society of trees, we might say, then we could hardly have too much of it, though even so it is questionable whether it would be well for us to live there all the time.

But turn now, in imagination, to forests of another sort. Let it be in some northern clime, where spindling trunks of spruce or cedar so crowd each other that it is almost impossible to find a way between them,—where the eye sees nothing but a jagged network of dead branches, and one is oppressed with a chill atmosphere of funeral gloom. Nothing grows there which will ever be turned to human use. There is no underbrush on which wild animals can feed, and no song of birds ever breaks the stillness of that living death. Or let it be some tropical jungle, where there is no passage, save as a path is chopped through the solid green; where the air is loaded with poisonous vapors, and deadly serpents lie in wait at every

turn; where trees do not live long, because each one of them is covered with, and soon smothered by, a mass of parasitic vines, and where even such beauty as infrequent blossoms display has rather a gaudy and unwhole-some look!

Forests like these it is not good for man to enter. They have no balm to administer either to his body or his spirit. Adventurers who wander into them, if they emerge at all, come forth broken and emaciated wrecks of manhood, so wasted by hunger or so filled with germs of disease that years may be required to nurse them back to life and health. And is there not a human society like that? Do not men so herd together, here and there, that they merely dwarf and stunt each other's life? Are there not crowds of people where vices flourish like the vines of a tropical forest, tending constantly to overlay and kill the very manhood and womanhood which bears them up?

If, then, we must divide social influences into these two classes, if society is here an ennobling and there a deadly thing, it is quite evident that in the principle of democracy alone we have no solution of the problems that beset the life of our race. Progress is not assured by the fact that people dwell together and establish social relations with each other. The society which they thus form may be one in which it is pleasant and profitable for a good man to live or it may be one in which his better powers almost inevitably perish; and in this latter case such a society can have no power to deliver itself from the ills under which it suffers. Given trees of a certain kind, not thrust too closely into contact with each other, and the result will be a forest in which it is a delight to wander. Given men and women of a certain type, with room enough to maintain some independence of each other,—

that is to say, given a sufficient amount of individualism, —and we can have a society capable of maintaining high traditions and pursuing noble ends. Otherwise, social influences are like to be degrading rather than elevating, and democracy can prove nothing but a delusion and a snare.

Moreover, though we may not so easily detect the fallacy of the doctrine that man is the creature of his social environment, apply the doctrine to trees, and we see at once how foolish it is. For no tree in the forest is merely what other surrounding trees have made of it. To some extent they may have sheltered it, or their shadow upon it may have checked its growth. But the tree grows because, for itself, it is rooted in something out of which it draws sustenance and strength. Trees do have considerable influence upon each other, which may be either helpful or harmful; but they grow big and strong, not because their branches are intermingled overhead or because their roots are intertwined underground, but because each tree makes an individual business of growing as fast as it can, for itself, out of whatever soil it can find to feed upon.

Now ours is a higher type of life, and our influence upon others of our kind is, without doubt, much more profound. The good man is immensely indebted to the society in which he has been reared, and the bad man is partly explained by the social environment in which he has been brought up. But while all the time men and women who have been given every social advantage that earth can afford are sinking, like a stone in water, till they find the lowest depths of immorality; while other men and women are emerging from scenes and surroundings that might have been expected to hold them with the remorse-

less grip of a question and taking their place as of right in the highest walks of our social life. how can any one speak as if that were not the product of this or that society. The outcome is almost upon the face of it. It is worse than assured. it is imminent and is doing at this very moment an incalculable amount of harm.

The new social conscience and the new social effort that have been aroused in recent years promise great things for days to come. But, when you have given the person who is low down in the scale of being every helping hand that it is possible to extend to him, he still has to make a tremendous effort on his own behalf; and no amount can be brought to his aid that it is worse for him to bear. no more effective ally could be provided for the temptations that beset his way, than the proclaimed social gospel that he is what he is because of the stamp which society has put upon him, and that there is no hope for him till a different society shall mould him into a different pattern. What he needs to bear, above everything else, is of a power within him capable, if he can but hold tight it, of setting every social aggression at defiance; for no outside influence which does not reuse and stimulate that power can be to him, in the end, of the least avail. And we have great reason to fear that current influences which treat the individual's faculty for self-help as a negligible quantity, in their insistence upon one or another desirable change to be wrought in the social system, are going to be for a lesser weight upon the mind of a multitude of people for a long time to come.

On every side of us we can detect the instinctive feeling that ideas are to be measured not by their intrinsic truth, but by the extent to which they are espoused by the masses of the people. Apparently, it gets to seem more and

more absolutely essential to many that they should go with the crowd. Against all history and all experience they insist upon thinking as if the New Testament maxim could be made to read: "Broad is the way that leadeth unto life, and many there be that go in thereat; and, where but few are seen, that should be regarded as a path leading toward destruction." This notion that, where the multitude is, there one may expect to find salvation, and that what the multitude says is to be accepted as law and gospel, comes near to being the greatest vice of our times. Shame on us that we are so wedded to standards of popularity! We all know better. We know that throughout the long past a brave few have made the initial fight for every gain that humanity has won, and that not infrequently it has been, literally, one man against the world, standing for a new truth or a higher righteousness. It is nothing but a craze of the hour which represents that in the great witches' cauldron of the world's life, where so many loathsome ingredients are seething together, the fine elixirs of being are getting themselves distilled. These highest things are only wrought out in the alembics of individual minds and hearts; and but for the achievements which they have won we should not know what this life of ours is good for.

But, to come back to the main symbol with which we started, how foolish that verse from the Psalmist would sound if it said, "He shall be as a tree planted—among other trees!" His leaf shall not wither, and he shall bring forth his fruit in his season, because he is surrounded by those of his own kind which set him a good example and look upon him with kindly interest! That would be an utterly unconvincing illustration,—not because sympathy and good example are without significance, but because it

misses the main fact of the situation. And, when it is said, "He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side," that does get hold of the essential thing in human life. It is rooted in something, and where it stands there is a life-giving stream that feeds it in secret ways, with a spirit that keeps it vigorous and strong. There is, to be sure, a mediation of this spirit of life, through many human agencies, through social opportunities and institutions, by no means to be neglected or despised. But, what is of far greater consequence, each human soul has its own direct access to the infinite founts of being. It is rooted for itself in the groundwork of all life, and planted beside those living streams which are capable of supplying its utmost need.

This is the priceless truth on which our Protestant faith is built. When men began to awake to consciousness of it, that marks the transition between the mediæval and the modern world. For long ages Christianity remained under the sway of the old Pagan idea, that the individual was nothing, save as he existed in and through the State. Corporate well-being was the one subject of supreme concern, because it was supposed that each separate person could have nothing more than his share of that common good. The movement which produced the Protestant Reformation began with a shift of emphasis to individual and personal well-being. Let men have a chance to develop what is in them, and out of better men will come a better State. In presence of the accomplished historic fact, that this wrought one of the greatest mental and spiritual awakenings the world has ever seen, it seems strange now to find so many harking back to the Roman persuasion, that social and corporate structures are the source of all human good. Very likely individualism has

been pushed, here and there, to too great an extreme; but, when men tell us that it has become a wholly antiquated gospel, they display only their contempt for historic precedent and their incapacity for sound thinking.

Our world at any given moment is and always must be what results when the two powers of individualism and collectivism play against each other. But, while no formula can be given for the right mixture of these two forces, it is perfectly safe to remember always that society was made for man, not man for society, and that the welfare of the individual person, everywhere, is the object of supreme concern. To some extent his life may be wrought upon for its improvement by social agencies. But to still greater extent that life will stand off and defy every influence of the kind that can be brought to bear upon him; and he will continue to live, as he has a mind to live, out of whatever root in the nature of things he possesses. When one gets at the mind of the average man through a psychology that really begins to interpret his essential being, it will be found, I think, that the example of the single great personality, which embodies what he can understand of spiritual nobility, has more weight with him than all the pictures of social perfection ever formed. The one tree, so planted by God's water-side that it has unfolded its nature in full majesty, will do more for the trees of your human forest than their whole combined influence can do for each other.

When people talk of individualism as if it meant, chiefly, unrestrained selfishness and ruthless greed, that appears to me to betray lamentable ignorance of the most rudimentary principles of our spiritual life. Man is by nature designed for the society of his kind, and, if he thinks, at first, to live and thrive by unsocial ways, he is sure to be

taught in the school of experience, at length, that this does not really pay. And if, because this lesson, like any other that human beings have to learn, is only slowly and painfully acquired, we think to hasten the process by some method that will lead to the practice of high ideals by compulsion, that shows, again, our ignorance of what is fundamental to our higher life,—that there can be no really divine order in this world's affairs save that which stands on a basis of freedom. The water-side by which our life is planted is one of which any thirsty soul can drink. The cup does not have to be brought to it by some specially established institutional means. It is curious to see the old Jewish notion that the son of Abraham was to be saved through race membership, and the ecclesiastical idea that the one gateway to heaven was in the keeping of the Church, now reappearing in the doctrine that Society is the one efficient savior of mankind.

He is, indeed, but foolish who forgets for one moment that his life needs to fit into peaceful and harmonious and helpful relations with other human lives. But also he is a coward who says, "I am only a little leaf or twig on the mighty tree of existence, and whether I grow or fade, become barren or fruitful, can only be as this vast whole of things shall determine." What he not only may say, but must say to show himself a man, is: "I am, myself, a tree planted by the water-side. My life is here; and the resources from which that life needs to draw are all provided. On me it depends to take into my mind and heart that sustenance on which other minds and hearts have grown so great, that I too may show forth God's glory by some fulfilment of his creative thought."

Instance after instance instructs us that this capacity of the individual soul is, practically, limitless. It is as

a sea whose farther shore we have never seen. Weak as we may know ourselves at this moment to be, and frightened as we quite likely are by the very boundlessness of that ocean of mental life on which we are embarked, we can learn to sail on and on, with endless hope of lands that lie beyond our setting sun. This life within us is no mere plaything of fate. It has powers to match the strength of anything that the universe can show. It has vistas of infinity which no adversity can block. He in whom it has found the truest image of itself declared that he was "one with God"; and when we, too, realize that God is for us, we shall not fear the hosts that may threaten to rise up against us.

THE CHILD IN THE MAN.

A little child shall lead them.—ISAIAH xi. 6.

The prophet of old days, wishing to convey by poetic imagery a hint of that blessed time when a prince of the royal line of his own people should arise to rule the whole world in righteousness, pictured an era yet to come when the wolf and the lamb should dwell together. The leopard and the kid, the calf and the young lion, should lie down together. And then, to crown the picture, he added, “a little child shall lead them.” This image of innocent childhood dominating and guiding creatures hitherto swayed only by savage and remorseless passion, certainly conveys as much as could be put into language of the idea of a final reign of perfect peace. It is the presence of the child which gives to that bit of word-painting its last and finest touch.

This expression, “a little child shall lead them,” seems particularly appropriate to Christmas, which has become, above everything else, a children’s festival. In all homes where there are children, they make the centre of Christmas rites and observances. It is for them, chiefly, that the feast is spread. With them maturity, under its load of heavy cares, or old age, beginning to feel the weight of physical infirmity, delights to become again “as a little child.” It is a season when the whole Christian world, in more than one sense of the phrase, renews its youth. Consciously or unconsciously, it is led back to see the world again with childish eyes, to enter into the

joys of life's opening period, and to try to restore a little in its own mind childhood's mental attitude of happy confidence and trust.

And this is a great matter, fraught, perhaps, with a much deeper significance than we have yet dreamed of. One does not know in just what mood Saint Paul wrote his oft-quoted saying, "When I became a man, I put away childish things." There are instances in which we may use that saying with a considerable degree of inward satisfaction. But there are other instances in which that putting away of childish things is nothing short of a calamity, for still the young heart and the old head need to go together; and woe betide the man or the nation in whose mature years no trace of youth is left!

Christianity is quite unique among the great religions of the world in the worship it has bestowed upon infancy. Whether its pictures of the Holy Babe denote the source of something new in the life of the world or are merely the outward tokens of a new spirit whose origin we do not know, equally they are of interest as indicating the presence of motives which are like to have far-reaching power. They seem to tell us of a spirit of reverence and wonder with regard to childhood which gives to parental love a distinctly new note. It must be that making a child the world's king will raise childhood itself to a new level in the world's thought. And, in fact, I think that is just what Christianity has accomplished. The love of children is, of course, universal with our kind, as it also pervades the animal world beneath us. Some of the rudest and most backward races are notable for the affection and kindness they manifest toward their young. But in the best Christian life this love takes a higher tone. It is not only delight in the beauty of infancy and

in the charm of its activities, but is tinged with a solemn sense of wonder at the dawn of intelligence one there beholds.

A dawn! Perhaps that figure will set forth the distinction I wish to convey. For with the rising of the sun one may rejoice, as nature rejoices, in the kindling light and warmth of his beams; or, in addition to that, he may stand spell-bound, even to the point of worship, in contemplation of those gorgeous colors spread over the face of the sky, through which the new day comes. In Christian thought and feeling the world takes that step forward, from mere delight in infancy to something of awe and reverence for what is in the heart of a child. "Trailing clouds of glory do we come." The feeling which Wordsworth thus expressed does not seem accidental on the lips of a Christian poet, if we remember what Christ said of little children and what place his own infancy has occupied in the spiritual imagination of the Church. The result is that childhood becomes vastly more than an amusement or a plaything. It is an infinitely sacred trust. In it there is committed to human keeping not only great loveliness, but a priceless treasure. It is to be guarded, not as a pleasing bauble, but as a rare jewel whose loss the whole world could not replace.

This feeling is beginning to tell profoundly upon our care of children. Now and again some one raises a note of warning that we may be doing too much, and interfering with nature's beneficent scheme for securing the "survival of the fit." He might as well go talk to the winds of damage they are likely to do as to interpose his remonstrance against the force of this Christian sentiment. The truth is that Christian hearts now feel as if in every babe, however it comes into the world, there were some-

thing of divinity. We can only look, therefore, with absolute abhorrence upon the pagan practice of leaving superfluous or deformed infants to perish, and upon every modification of that practice which modern paganism may suggest. None of us can see very clearly how things will work out in the ongoing of the race, but, for my part, I will trust that sentiment which I regard as one of the great characteristics of the Christian spirit, much more than I will trust any conclusion which an unsentimental social science may have to urge. Life on the whole, I suspect, knows its own road better than any of us can teach it the true path, and here seems to me to be an advance in race consciousness which of right will have its way with us.

For it is, I take it, a true discernment of values, and not a foolish fancy, which sees something in infancy that makes its cradle worthy to be considered a kind of sacred shrine. There is something there before which the grown man may well bow his head in adoration. It is something that he himself has lost, and feels in his heart that he would give worlds to regain if only he knew how such recovery could be made. And that something is more than the mere innocence or spotless purity of the childish mind. It is faculty and a power that belong to the opening period of our life here below, and which, in the very process of growing up, we somehow have, in part at least, to forfeit. There is a sense in which the man has become the child's inferior. He is as one who, for the time being, has been cast out from his kingdom of heaven, and who must therefore be content to dwell in a lower place.

When a shallow and superficial wit has tired of aiming its shafts of satire against the Garden of Eden story, it

will be willing, perhaps, to let some one teach it the profound truth which that story contains. Because, in most sober earnest, the knowledge of good and evil which comes to men and women does operate to drive them forth from their earthly paradise. Mature manhood and womanhood ought to be looking back to childhood, as the fallen Peri looked back through the gates of heaven, to catch glimpses of the beauty from which she had been expelled.

Is it mere fancy and half-forgetfulness that make us think of our childhood as such a happy and blessed time? Assuredly not. It was then good to be alive, as at no time since, save by rare snatches, have we been satisfied with what the cup of life has put to our lips. Children have something of the greatest worth which we have been forced to give up, and for the loss of which all our gain in knowledge does not wholly atone. He who feels this will not be ashamed to join in that worship of infancy which the Christian Church has established. The life of the babe is more than a blank page not yet inscribed with characters of virtue or blotted with a record of sin. It is a type of existence that somehow holds the secret of that bliss which, we feel in our hearts, existence should confer. And that secret has so far escaped from us that we can but look in wonder upon the fathomless peace and contentment and trust which shine through the eyes of a child.

Now I think we may understand this better if we consider our mature life as being, at the best, a kind of half-way stage. There is childhood behind us and heaven is still before us, and we are somewhere between the two. We have lost something in order that we might gain the more, but we do not now hold that gain in secure pos-

session, nor shall we ever fully grasp it till we come to another state of being.

All the more primitive types of existence have much that we lack,—much that, in the very process of becoming what we are, has been overlaid and obliterated by later constructions of the mind. A familiar instance of this is the keenness of sensation in animals and in the wilder kind of men which we civilized mortals cannot begin to emulate. In acuteness of vision and of hearing we do not begin to be the equals of the lowest type of the African savage. Even the scent of a dog is to us a perpetual miracle, and, if we did not know by what faint traces he can track unseen footsteps, the report of it would be to us incredible. I am myself disposed to think, from what I have read and seen, that the strange gift of which we are beginning to hear something under the name of telepathy, and which by laborious effort can be brought, here and there, a little into use, is in us the faint survival of a power which in the animal world is quite freely exercised.

And in the mind of a child there is a certain keenness and directness of mental perception that, when one stops to think of it, is most amazing. Years of study, however they extend the range of its knowledge, do not sharpen its wit. That wit, almost from the beginning, has a fineness of edge and a fertility of resource which experience tends rather to blunt than to improve. For a feeling of reality which will penetrate even a very shrewd disguise, for power to go straight to the heart of any question within the grasp of its comprehension,—separating between its essential and its accidental features,—for this commend me, every time, to the mind of a child. The first few years of his life, undoubtedly, far surpass in

importance any equal period in the subsequent career of the individual; and even during infancy that life, to large extent, has charge of itself. As a growing plant takes out of the soil in which it is rooted what it needs and wants, so this growing mind absorbs knowledge by a wonderful selective process of its own, and about all that its teachers have to do is to supply the necessary material.

These are obvious instances, I am sure, of a good deal more that lies beyond our sight. In the primitive deeps of mind, in what is now coming to be called the "subconscious" or the "subliminal" self, there are astounding capacities which our psychology has but little explored. The child comes into the world, as it were, on a full tide of that subconscious life, and that is where childhood gets its incomparable grace and charm.

But we seem to be here for the development of a more distinctly personal existence. Our first great acquisition is that of a self-consciousness which the child seems to lack. It is as if, in us, the creative effort were bent to produce, out of a great sea of conscious being, separate existences which should hold the key of their destiny in their own hands. To give us immortality, to establish in each one of us a combination of the elements of personal life, which is locked up and fixed under the charge of our own personal will so that not even death can undo that combination,—this appears to be what the world is for, if we can assign any purpose for its creation. And to achieve this end, in order to gain this mastery, we are presently furnished with a new range of powers which childhood does not possess. Intellect awakes. A faculty of logic springs up and takes command. Reflective processes begin to work. More and more we find ourselves unable to float submissively on any tide that bears

us along, and forced to fight for control, both of ourselves and of the things by which we are surrounded. The result of this, however, is that a great chasm seems to open between maturity and the youth from which it sprang. The growth and exercise of those powers which the world's work calls into play, in great measure repress and inhibit the childish mind within us. We leave behind not only the imperfection and the foolishness of youth, but its splendor, its daring, its faith, its pure joy of the universe to which its eyes are opened.

And this is not a disenchantment forced upon us by the increase of knowledge. It is not that we get "behind the scenes" and find that to be tawdry and cheap which at first had a trick to deceive us by false glamour. It is a loss of faculty in us that accounts for this change. What happens to us is like what took place in the mind of the great naturalist, Darwin, when he lost his interest in poetry and music. Special pursuits to which we are committed overlay and crowd out the more primitive capacities of our being, and, however inevitable this may be, it is a tremendous sacrifice.

But (and this is the special thing that I have come so far to say) from time to time wonderful personalities appear, with a gift of leadership such as few possess, and it puzzles us much to see why they have such power of command. It is not only that they have great wisdom, because, sometimes, they are not very wise. On the whole, we cannot say much more than that they are remarkable persons.

Now, without attempting to clear up this mystery, there is one suggestion which seems to me to throw much light upon it. It is that, in trying to account for the mysterious power of personality, we should consider if in

certain cases the childish mind, instead of being outgrown and left behind, is not carried forward and mingled with the mind of maturity; if the child-nature, instead of being buried by the accretions of later years, does not sometimes hold its reign and go on to speak with authority through the voice of the man. If that be true, then, you see, where the great leader of men sways a multitude of hearts, we have, in a curious way, a fulfilment of the old prophecy, "a little child shall lead them." It is the child in the man who exerts that wide command. If that be true, then, through the word of every great leader of the race it is "deep calling unto deep,"—not life's more superficial attainments seeking to assume control, but something primitive and profound in our life addressing the profundities of other hearts.

And, certainly, if we study any mind which has exerted vast influence over the common thought and feeling, we shall find a great deal which is childlike in its character and action. For one thing, it is apt to manifest a certain swiftness and sureness of decision which is eminently characteristic of the child-nature. Indecisiveness gets to be the very stamp of a highly developed intellectual life. Perhaps, at this moment, there is far less of atheism and irreligion among our cultivated classes than we are wont to imagine. The trouble is that they simply cannot make up their minds. They do not have what one of our latter-day philosophers has called the "will to believe." Perhaps the delightful but forever doubtful and half-melancholy Hamlet is the best portrait ever painted of pure intellectual cultivation. In contrast with that stands the deep, underlying, inexpugnable certainty of every mind—say like that of Luther's—which has exercised real dominion over the hearts and lives of others.

And this is decidedly a youthful trait. The child, in so far as it has convictions, holds them without the slightest wavering of doubt. Possibilities of error which scare us out of our faith, though they be but dim shadows of the mind, the child never notices. For this reason I think we may say that it requires a certain combination of childhood and maturity to give us a really great leader of the race.

Then there is the capacity for moral enthusiasm, the willingness to commit everything to a great venture of faith, which the born king of his kind always manifests, and which also is a characteristic of youth. In such a crisis as that which arose at the time of our Civil War, it is the young men who save the nation. While older men sit debating what should be done in this grave emergency, youth rushes forward, even into the very "jaws of death," to solve the problem by impetuous action.

Above all, perhaps, there is a certain type of self-consciousness common to childhood and to the great minds of the race, which lends force to the suggestion of a surviving childhood in maturity which fits it for the greatest things. Most of us are so afflicted with dumbness and paralysis because we are unable to escape from the sound of our own voice. We get the mind focussed upon self, and what is outside self remains, more or less, a blur. In the child this is exactly reversed. It is perfectly aware of self, but is never watching it to see what self is doing; and that watchfulness is the very spring of all the foolish bashfulness which seals up our expression of the best that is in us.

On the whole there is much reason to say that a truly childlike man is one of the best gifts that Heaven can send.

And does not this mean that a considerable part of what one of our modern essayists has spoken of as the "disadvantage of being grown up" is really needless? In part, no doubt, the discipline we have here to undergo must separate us from our childish mind. We are driven forth on so wide a quest that the blessed isles from which we launched seem to sink quite below the horizon. And yet we are the same beings who once embarked on those sunlit strands where one single hour often held a half-eternity of pure joy; and, as we now know that the secret of that happiness was in ourselves rather than in our surroundings, surely the knowledge of that secret ought not to be altogether lost beyond recall.

And do not these reflections furnish new insight into Christ's saying, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"? Into whatever barren desert we have wandered, the golden age of youth does not lie hopelessly behind us. It is also before us, to be again discovered when our pilgrimage is done. We leave the paradise where life began, as birds leave their parent nest, to go out into the battle of existence, where our independent powers are to be tested and formed. But what is gained if we all perish in that battle, with no conquest finally won? No, we are to come back again to the "Father's house," to be once more as a little child. We are greatly at loss to conceive what heaven should be, but the prospect need not be all a blank if we think that it is to give us back our youth. We shall "know, as also we are known." That is to be the fruit of our earthly striving. But, with all care and anxiety and fearful imaginings put away from us, we can once more give ourselves to those deeper currents of being in which are "life and light and bliss."

THE WISDOM OF CHRIST.

Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—*1 COR. i. 24.*

I have endeavored in another discourse to suggest the possibility of some commingling of childhood with mature manhood, which, perhaps, gives the great mind and heart its power of wide command over the lives and fortunes of our race. There is a certain childlikeness in many famous men and women which lends color to this suggestion. They are persons in whom, to an unusual degree, the traits especially characteristic of youth have been carried forward into mature life. This is likely to give them great capacity for leadership, because the mass of mankind are still but "children of a larger growth," and because also, the child that still survives in the man, so far as he is allowed expression, has a facility as well as a certainty in the use of his powers which studied art can never quite acquire. No consummate acting ever equalled, in grace and eloquence, the unconscious gesture of a child; and no philosopher, by hard effort, ever wrung from existence such faith as springs naturally out of the childish heart.

I should not hesitate to apply this suggestion to the greatest life of human history; and it acquires all the more force, in this connection, from the wonderful sayings about children which we find in our Gospels. When Jesus set a little child before his disciples, in answer to their query as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, I think he meant that child to be a symbol

of something more than mere innocence. His repeated commendation of the childish mind would seem to imply that he saw something in its nature, not only of negative worth, but of supreme positive value.

I therefore consider that Jesus of Nazareth was, to wonderful extent, an exemplification of his own teaching, in that he was a childlike man; and I am ready to begin such explanation as I am able to make of his hold upon the life of the world, by calling this one secret of his power.

But that is a suggestive phrase which we have taken from the writings of Saint Paul,—“Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The fact is that wisdom and power do not always go together; and it seems to be one of the mysteries of existence that so many men are enabled to get a wide control into their hands, when they do not know very well what to do with it. Popular heroes are not always—one is almost ready to say not often—men of sound judgment and discretion. There is something in them that touches the popular heart. They come into the world furnished with one sort of ability, which enables them to exert vast influence over other lives. In many instances, at least, we could partly account for this by a certain quality of perpetual youth which seems to belong to them,—a certain boyishness of enthusiasm and hope and courage, which much endears them to the popular mind.

But, alas! though they have great power, which might be exercised for most beneficent and permanent ends, they sometimes squander it—or even turn it to base uses—for lack of wisdom to direct them how to employ their unusual opportunity. I think, as one gets on in life, he comes to have rather an instinctive dread of the fluent

talker. A sagacious man of my acquaintance, though one rather given to violent expression of opinion, was wont to declare that the great orator was of necessity a great liar. One so often sees that men with a rare gift of speech, by which they can sway the hearts of a multitude, are, after all, men of shallow thought and uncertain judgment, that he wonders why Providence has not arranged better to have the people, into whose keeping such tools are committed, know more adequately how to use them.

It is a great thing in this world to get a leader who has the faculty to draw many hearts and minds after him, and who also possesses a sureness of vision to see in what road this throng of people ought to walk. And this fact may attract our attention to the words employed by the Christian Apostle in speaking of the Master whom he was trying to persuade the world to follow,—“Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

It is a wonderful thing to be able so to speak that the world will pause to listen. But, whatever the reason may be, that ability does not always carry with it a certainty of something to say which it is good for the world to hear. And, when he who speaks as one “with authority” has an ultimate truth to declare, that is a sufficiently rare phenomenon in the annals of our race to be worthy of all that the Christian Church has attempted to build upon it.

But what is wisdom, and what is it to be truly wise? How shall we justify this expression of the earliest Christian writer, “Christ the wisdom of God”? It is quite obvious that wisdom is something other than a mass of information or knowledge about particular things. One finds men, now and then, who are, in effect, walking

encyclopædias of history or science or literature, but who none the less are far from being competent directors of anybody's thought and conduct. They have not judgment enough to manage their own affairs successfully, and their opinions about public matters never turn out to be correct. On the other hand, there are well-known instances of very wise men, who have had but little learning; and that fact, I suppose, was in the mind of Saint Paul when he wrote of the foolishness of the wisdom of men. Given the faculty to use knowledge well for some of life's higher purposes, then, the more knowledge a man possesses, the greater his usefulness will be. But, where that faculty is wanting in the mind, it is not to be supplied merely by increasing the store of information.

You cannot gauge wisdom by the amount of knowledge possessed, any more than you can measure it by the size of a man's library. The question is, whether his books be few or many, what effective use he is able to get out of them. This consideration ought to dispose of the objection, which one sometimes hears, that Jesus of Nazareth could not have been so very wise, because much has been learned since his day of which he was presumably ignorant. Wisdom consists in the breadth and precision of one's view of life, as a whole. It is not minute familiarity with some little corner of existence, but something like a map of it altogether, which shows its main highways and the ends toward which these broader paths of being run.

The skill of the specialist has its place; and yet he who is a specialist, and nothing else, is one of the most ignorant men alive. This is an age of specialization, and it is also an age very deficient in great philosophers. Surely, we should be near the extreme swing of the pendu-

lum in one direction, when it comes to the point of believing, as many now do, that the world has no more need of philosophy and philosophers. The wide outlook is not to-day much sought after or cultivated. People distrust their own sight, and indeed all vision, when it is lifted to anything beyond narrow and immediate interests.

Now I call Christ supremely wise because he saw human existence as a whole, and, as I think, saw it accurately. With the small details of duty he did not much concern himself. The scribes could not understand him, because the tithing of "mint, anise, and cumin," was to them the great matter; and modern scribes find fault with his teaching because, when it comes to specific directions, his words seem often vague and contradictory. But his was the far look. He was speaking often of realities so distant and so high that most of us cannot easily decide, for ourselves, whether they are mountain or cloud. It is all folly to expect from that kind of mind photographic accuracy with regard to such questions as the practical moralist loves to dwell upon; and they who turn away from his teachings because they do not find him satisfactory as a sociological authority, miss altogether the great service which he has performed for mankind.

Beyond these affairs of the day and hour, he was looking away to realities that have eternal significance. The question is, Did he see truly there? If he did, then that is a wisdom of whose aid no human being can afford to deprive himself. There is not a problem of daily living, not a detail of duty in any field of man's endeavor, that will not be appreciably or even profoundly modified, accordingly as one believes or disbelieves in that vision which Christ unfolds to him.

We might indeed see for ourselves, as ideals, the same things that he sets before us. But he declares them to us as fixed realities; and the question, whether or not we can take his word for this is, truly, one of momentous import. Millions of human beings do trust him to that extent. What do you think their case would be if that trust were taken away from them, and they were left to such ideals as you could inspire in their minds?

And you yourself, with all your dreams of what might be or even what will be in the ongoing of time,—does it make no difference to you whether any soul has had such grasp of these visions that he could know them as something more than dreams? If you try to believe, for example, that some good power rules over this world of ours, why should it seem to you a thing incredible that at least one soul has come near enough to that power to be absolutely sure of its presence? and how can you help gaining strength for your hope if you do thus trust in the word of one who saw spiritual realities, not as a possibility, but as an everlasting fact!

I say that here was a wisdom of sufficient height and range to see the main path of human destiny,—whither it tends and where it leads. Why do you want that same wisdom to pick out for you and placard the pitfalls along the way? You should be able to do that for yourself. This other service of telling you that what you see as a kind of dreamland, far off upon the horizon, is not mirage, but a blessed country, whither your journey tends, is of inestimable worth. It makes untold difference to you, in each day's march, whether, so far as you know, you are drifting aimlessly on toward final oblivion, or follow a path which will lead you to the gates of some celestial city; and it is in this way that the wisdom

of God which was in Christ touches the whole life of mankind.

There is one other distinction to which I should like to call attention, because, in these days, complaint is frequently made that the ethics of the gospel do not work out well in practical affairs. Our life has two sides, two poles, two dominating interests; and it is a never-ending puzzle to get the two adjusted into something like satisfactory relations. There is Cæsar's kingdom and the kingdom of heaven, both having their claims upon us. There is the individual impulse and the socialistic impulse, between which we are continually torn.

To what extent am I entitled to look out for myself, and how far should I sacrifice my interests to the general good? This is often a hard problem, and many people seem to think that, if Christ is to help the world anywhere, it should be at just this point. Not at all. It was put squarely up to him in that question about the tribute money, and he wisely declined to have anything to do with it. His mission was to enforce upon human attention the reality and the authority of the heavenly life. Cæsar's kingdom was here, and everybody knew about it, and it could abundantly take care of itself. What he felt himself commissioned to do was to bring in and establish another kingdom, of the spirit. How the two might get on side by side, where, at any given moment, one was to govern and the other give way,—this was no part of his concern. He did not take up questions like these: first, I suppose, because the whole discipline of life consists in trying to find their answers, and there would be no discipline for us if we could turn to some ready-made solution; and, secondly, because, in the nature of the case, any solution that may be found is

good only for that immediate situation to which it is applied, and beyond that is good for nothing whatever.

Men talk now about the rising tide of "Socialism," as if that were some new power that had come to enlighten the world or a new peril from which mankind had not suffered before. In point of fact, that struggle between individualism and social organization is as old as human history; and it is a struggle which will go on as long as our race endures. From time to time, adjustments are made that can stand for a season; and then, for a time, the struggle becomes less fierce. But, then, again conditions change, and the strife has to begin anew. How, under such circumstances, can a teacher of men lay down a rule, to balance self-interest and public spirit, which will have validity beyond the day and hour in which it is made? And, if we had such a rule, where would our moral faculties get their training for independent action? What Christ accomplished was to equip one of these conflicting powers, so that never again can it be silenced or thrown down in the contest.

Whatever happens, selfishness henceforth can never have unchecked rule. The kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men is now always a power to be reckoned with. It may not get its whole way with us. Indeed, it cannot, while we are material as well as spiritual beings. But neither can the animal that is in us ever wholly conquer. Under the influence of what Christianity has accomplished, our race is bound to keep striving toward spiritual standards of living; and it is one of the signs of the greatness of the wisdom of Christ that to secure the continuance of this striving apparently satisfied his ambition. He made no move to displace Cæsar's kingdom. He left no word to indicate a thought that

this kingdom must pass away. But within that outward rule, he did aim to set up another indestructible authority, whose business it should be to guide men's steps in a heavenward way,—to teach them what they must do, not merely for the sake of social peace and harmony, but to win eternal life; and I know no other purpose in human history which has been crowned with more abundant success.

One observes, in much of the literature of the period, something very like a panic with regard to the future of the Christian religion. Outside the Church the opinion is freely expressed that Christianity has become a bankrupt faith, as Greek religion became bankrupt when the stories told by Homer no longer found credence with the people. Even inside the Church the same opinion here and there prevails. I was lately reading a sermon preached from a pulpit of some prominence, which proclaimed that Catholicism was dead and Protestantism was dead; and, indeed, there did not appear to be much living, save that this preacher was himself alive, to set forth some new evangel of his own. Now, for one, I refuse to be much disturbed by anxiety on this account, because, if Christianity can die out of the life of the world, it is not what I have taken it to be, and in that case I am in no wise solicitous that it should live. The panic, it seems to me, comes almost altogether from a foolish identification of what is permanent in Christianity with certain systems of belief.

Perhaps there is no more misleading phrase than that which is now much employed in certain branches of the Church,—“a deposit of faith.” It is suggestive, of course, of that pure gold which is sometimes found in the bed of a running stream. But it has to be remembered

that not every sand-bank which such a stream has built up will yield that precious metal, and that some of these "deposits" might be removed, not only without loss, but to the vast improvement of the channel. The notion of an infallible, unchanging "doctrine" is one of the most illusive, and in some respects the most mischievous, that can get into the minds of men.

As one surveys the intellectual history of mankind, it changes and wavers like a play of northern lights. The same words, living on for centuries, are no more than as so many pegs on which an infinite variety of meanings may be hung. The great landmarks of human history are not beliefs, but persons; and, wherever there stands a supreme personality, there is something to tie to amid the floods of change. Greek religion became bankrupt because its spiritual capital was kept in the form of a symbolism, which instantly lost value when faith in it declined. Christian symbolism is just as uncertain as any other kind, save as it is supported by something behind it of imperishable worth. All this glowing imagery is, like paper money, the mere token of values.

There may be what the world calls a great "speculative boom" in such things, but they easily fall into discredit, save as they may be converted into underlying realities which possess abiding worth. All Christian ideas and symbols rest, for their foundation, on the person of Christ. In proportion as they can be, so to speak, converted back into terms of his life and character, they will live. In proportion as they are false promises to render something which really has no existence in him, they will pass away; and what we are witnessing just now is the beginning of a great auditing in the Church, during which

a considerable amount of fictitious capital is likely to be swept out of existence.

But the plain fact is that, wherever the story of the life of Christ is told, it has a wonderful power of fixing itself in human thought and imagination, and that they who live with the image thus formed within them more and more discover it to be filled with the wisdom as well as the power of God. We send our thought along those higher reaches and altitudes of being where it may sometimes climb, and we come to some vantage-point where the kingdoms of the world seem to lie spread out before us in a new light. We are tempted to think, perhaps, that we are the first to whom that prospect has been revealed. But, even while we look, some phrase from the Master's teaching springs to our lips, and we are made aware that he has been there before us. After repeated experiences of this kind, we become sure that he was at home on these heights of the spirit, that we shall gain no outlook with which he was not familiar, and that much more than we shall ever see stood plain to his sight.

In him, then, is the wisdom we need to illumine our way. What he tells us is that we are, at the deepest heart of us, spiritual beings; that we have a life to live which stretches out into realms of perfect blessedness and everlasting day; that we stand within the care and keeping of a power whose delight it is to help us on our way to that glorious consummation; and that no child of earth, seeking to do God's will, need despair of reaching a heavenly dwelling-place at last. If that be folly, then no wisdom exists; and, if such teaching be wise, then it is the highest wisdom ever spoken by human lips or received into human hearts.

THE UNITARIAN PROTEST.

There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 Tim. ii. 5.

It is said that there is, in these times, almost no general interest in theological questions. Nevertheless, I desire to speak for a few moments of a point in theology; one which has been, in the past, a matter of great public concern. I wish to do this by way of showing that the protest on which this church took its stand, some one hundred and twenty-five years ago (it being then the first of all American churches to assume that attitude), embodied something more than a mistaken idea.

An honored and distinguished representative of what is, in some respects, the most modern thought in religion has lately said, in print, that he is unable to see why “men who think resolutely should hesitate to affirm the Deity of Jesus Christ.”

It is quite obvious that many, of whom it might be supposed that, by inheritance or otherwise, they would hold such a scruple, have ceased to entertain it; and in certain quarters it appears to be taken for granted that the protest of which I have spoken must presently disappear from the thought of the Church. It is plain, too, that times have greatly changed since this church altered its ancient Book of Prayer and ceased to address its petitions to Christ as God. This author whom I have quoted, while he affirms the Deity in Christ, affirms, also (and apparently without change of meaning in the

term), the Deity in the spiritual side of human nature everywhere. Certainly had one been allowed to say that in the Church a century ago, the Unitarian controversy would have been in large measure forestalled.

For one, I have been accustomed to say that I cared not in what highest heaven the human author of our faith might be enthroned, so long as an open door were left his disciples to follow where he had gone before and to enter into the glory he had won. This now appears to be fully granted by men who still regard the Unitarian protest as being somewhat overstrained. But I must think that, as a matter of public policy, there is a valid ground for that same scruple, about affirming the Deity of Christ, on which this church once took its stand.

I well remember a striking discourse once given by Dr. Hedge, in his later years, on Idolatry; the main thought of which may serve to illustrate the view I mean to uphold. Dr. Hedge took the position, then somewhat novel among Protestant Christians, that the use of images in popular religion the world over was legitimate and necessary. Idolatry, defined as the employment of such symbols in worship, so far from being a sin, was in his opinion essential to the very existence of religion in the earlier stages of human development. The childish mind required these images, in order to concentrate its thought and feeling on any object of worship whatever; and, on their better side, the so-called heathen religions ought not to be judged as if they really "bowed down to wood and stone," because, in truth, they were looking through the symbol to a greater power beyond. The image was to them as a kind of window into the unseen. Among ancient peoples the Jew was the only person able to hold his faith without assistance from the

use of idols, and he was a man so exceptional in character that he should not be made a rule by which to judge the rest of mankind.

At the same time Dr. Hedge pointed out the very grave danger to which idolatry is always exposed. It is difficult to determine, in any given case, how far the worshipper looks through his idol to a mysterious presence behind it, of which the idol is only a token, and to what extent he so identifies the visible figure with an invisible power, that his fetish becomes, in itself, the source whence he expects to derive help. But, though it may be impossible to locate that line of division, the line, nevertheless, exists; and it marks the distinction between two kinds of religion, one of which has an upward tendency, while the other tends just as surely in a downward way. Such use, for example, as the Catholic Church makes of images is good and helpful in so far as these things serve to direct the thoughts of people to what is greater than they. But the moment when people begin to pray only to the images themselves religion is debased from its proper place. It becomes no better than a superstition, and, as such, tends continually to sink to lower and lower levels of unreason and absurdity.

The Jew, then, of old times was not a mere fanatic in his hatred of idolatry. He may not have possessed much sympathetic insight by which to interpret what was best in the religions surrounding him; but he saw perfectly, and truly, the awful peril contained in them. For, while religion of the better sort has always been the chief inspiration of mankind, religion of the baser kind has been a fearful hindrance and curse in the life of every people. The Jew would not tolerate the use of any graven image whatever. Whether or not he under-

stood why these things were often bad, he clearly discerned that they did produce bad consequences; and for long centuries he maintained a single-handed, sometimes a despairing, warfare against them, by which courageous struggle he has put the whole race infinitely in his debt.

Now if anything stands clear and plain in the teachings of Christ it is that he meant to serve for his immediate followers and for all who should believe on him as a way to God. It is quite possible, then, is it not? that in Christianity we shall find the same two tendencies that are to be noted in all other of the great religions. That is to say, there will be one type of mind which uses "the way" as a road to some higher end, and another type of mind which uses "the way" as if it were itself the goal and end. There is the Christianity which so far distinguishes between Christ and God that it looks through the Son to the Father; and there is the Christianity for which the Son practically is the Father; so that, when the soul has reached Christ, there is no further journey that it needs to go.

Not for one moment would I seem to say that this distinction is only a matter of dogma, or that in actual life it can be always clearly pointed out. I would not deny that there has been a vast deal of beautiful and inspiring piety where the identification of Christ and God has seemed to be most complete. He was a good and great man who said that "Jesus Christ was the only God he knew." But I do say that in this identification there is a certain peril to the weaker mind; that among the masses of men it may anywhere be the beginning of those downward courses in religion which have wrought such havoc in the Christian Church; and that, therefore, somebody will have to make over again, in the modern world, some-

what the same fight that the Jew made in the ancient world for deliverance from what amounts only to a higher kind of idolatry.

It is without doubt almost immeasurable gain when in place of those marble statues which once adorned Greek cities the world has put such a figure as that of Christ, one to be seen only with the eye of the mind, as its object of worship. And yet the same question that is used to distinguish between the good and bad sides of paganism may also be employed, with profit, to make a distinction in Christian life. Is this human figure "very God," or is it a finite form through which one looks up toward the Infinite, above and beyond our sight? To many, no doubt, it can be something of both, but to the vast majority I suspect the identification of Christ and God will mean that Christ is all the God they know; and that loss of the infinite background against which the person of Christ should be seen seems to me to open the door to tendencies in the Church which are bound to produce unfortunate results.

In individual cases it may be difficult, or impossible, to note these tendencies; but in the broad way—as a matter of public policy—I hold that in affirming the Deity of Christ the Church stands on that same dangerous ground which has so often proven a quicksand to the feet of religion. There is, therefore, I think, still a reasonable scruple to be entertained against making that affirmation; for I judge that the same weary, and often apparently, hopeless contest which the Jew maintained of old may have to be waged by somebody in coming time, to deliver Christianity from that peril.

It is now a subject for much congratulation with many people that the chasm between God and man has at last

been closed up. Well, if one talks of chasms, yes. But surely the existence of a valid difference does not imply yawning and impassable gulfs of separation. It seems to be difficult for humanity to do anything without over-doing it; and the effort to bring God and man more closely together appears to end here and there, by making them all one. The humanizing of Deity, though both good and inevitable within certain limits, when pushed too far becomes a positive disaster to faith. Books have been published in recent time, emanating even from seats of theological learning, which leave one gasping with astonishment at the limitations to which modern theism sometimes subjects itself. To the more sober sense of the world the life of God and the life of men will always seem different. One may be in the likeness of the other, but no human personality can answer to our highest thought of what God must be; and, if all we can think or know of Deity is to be put within the compass of the mind of our human race, then we lose much of the spiritual beauty and mystery for which the name of God should stand.

On the whole, there could not be a better statement of what appears to me the real heart and essence of Christian faith than that which we have taken for a text; and, if the Christian world might walk by its light, there would be deliverance from all sorts of fallacies and false extremes. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Here are we in our own lower place, the supreme work of creation, indeed, so far as we can know what creation is, but held within narrow limits, beyond which, as yet, we cannot pass; and over us somewhere, near or far, we feel that there must be greater life and power, out of which we and all things in this wondrous universe have come. This Deity may be

close to us, but we see him not. Heaven may be nearer to us than the clouds above our heads, but its invisible gates appear to be shut against our longing eyes. And between these two realms, for the Christian believer at least, stands one whom God has raised up to be a link between earth and heaven, a hint to human hearts of the love and peace and glory beyond their sight, a hand to raise them as they climb, through doubts and fears, to what they still believe to be their proper home.

One great name for Christ, in the Church, perhaps the greatest, has always been that of "Mediator." He is the Saviour of men because he thus stands to them as a means of connection between the earthly and the spiritual worlds. Religion has its great office, its main excuse for being, in the fact that it has, or is believed to have, some ability to put men in closer touch with that realm of the spirit which is other than the realm of flesh and sense. Take away the idea that, however God may be here, where our consciousness now abides, there are, so to speak, larger spaces outside where he may also be found, and religion is dead at the root. The Church is nothing but a survival from ancient superstitions, unless new life can be brought by its agency, from some higher world, which, without such aid, the mass of men is not likely to reach.

Such mediation, in the most cherished belief of devout Christians, Christ can, and does, effect. And surely it may be pointed out that, as mediator, he ought not to be too closely identified with either the divine or the human realm. Wherever he came from and whoever he was, he could only perform what Christendom has held to be his great work by coming into some middle place, where, in efficiency at least, he was more than man and less than

God. We do not say of him that he was a "mere man," because it appears to us that, through divine grace, the potentialities of human nature were so suddenly and so completely filled in him as to raise him to heights which ordinary men for ages yet may be unable to attain. And how can we say of him that he was God? that, being in the form of a man, his being was co-extensive with that of the infinite Father, whom he loved and served?

With regard to that mediation which we Christians look to find through him, there may be much change of belief without damage to the essential idea of what such office is. Formerly it was held that he was the only person through whom human beings could be brought near to God; that he was the only means through which any soul could be saved. But that is in no wise necessary to Christian faith. It was Paul who said that God had not left himself without a witness in any time or place; and none but bigots now, I think, will any longer say that the great races of the East, being untouched by Christianity, have heard only false prophets, and have no mediator of their own to help them lay hold upon a divine presence.

Formerly it was supposed that at least a large part of the work of Christ was to appease the wrath of God, which had been kindled against his rebellious children, and to bring him to forgive and receive back to his favor the repentant soul. All that misunderstanding is rapidly passing away. One perceives that there may be numberless wrong ideas as to what he is doing, or has done, standing between God and man, without altering the fact that he does occupy that place and has wrought mightily for human benefit. Perhaps we now are far from understanding adequately either the divine grace or the human need which he has brought together, but at least it may be claimed

that Christians can begin to see with clearer eyes and give a more reasonable account of the faith that is in them.

For one thing we can perceive that there has been through Christ a mediation, to this world's intelligence, of truths in themselves too great for any human mind to grasp. Who could know, by gazing steadfastly at the sun, so much as that the great "Orb of Day" was there, save by the hurt to his poor organs of sight? That dominating centre of our system of worlds is to us no more than a confused blur and blinding glare unless we have something between ourselves and it, through which its overpowering rays may fall. Even so, if we try to turn our spiritual gaze directly toward Infinity, we are apt to experience only hurt to our minds. Try to conceive, in any respect, what eternity and infinity must be, and the mind is at once bewildered and appalled by the futility of its endeavor. I know nothing more painful than to try to comprehend an endless universe. It is like a staggering blow to think that there is no end to the multitude of worlds, while our thought can only compass what has a beginning and an end. So of the Infinite mind; it dwells, as Christ's great apostle said, in a "light which no man can approach unto"; and it was that same apostle who, by most suggestive figures of speech, gave a clew to those beliefs which have since been so much to the Christian world. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord." "God hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

At the least this great soul walked so close with God and had its conversation so much in heaven that something of the radiance of that celestial sphere clung to it as a visible appearance among men. Still more, it is

given us to think that the great spirit, life of all that is, shining through this wondrous personality, not only gave beauty to the form that had an earthly origin, but revealed to human sight something of its own hidden perfection. For where the light falls through richly colored windows into dim cathedral interiors, it is not only that these marvellous tints are there on the painted glass, it is that they are somehow contained in the pure white light itself, and doubtless might be found therein, by eyes with full capacity to see, without such mediation. And thus the familiar lines from one of our own poets admirably express one side of the faith of Christian hearts,—

"So to our mental eyes subdued,
Flesh veiled, but not concealed,
We know in this the Fatherhood
And heart of God revealed."

And is there not a still deeper service that we need to have performed for our benefit? As we get away from that crass materialism which will have it that all the strength we possess comes to us through chemical transformations out of the food we eat, we have a growing feeling that our life must be fed through many secret springs; and, if an infinite spirit may directly touch our spirits, to send into them comfort and healing and help, then the point of contact, where such new life may pass, becomes to us an affair of momentous importance. There are theories, to be sure, that we have nothing to do about this, that it is altogether God's concern and he will look after it. All kinds of mediation between God and the soul are sometimes said to be needless, or worse than needless, even intrusive and pernicious. If any have the hardihood to live by such theories, we need not quarrel with their

experiment. But I am sure that the matter does not thus stand in the experience of mankind. There are means and agencies through which the soul is helped to come into such relations with the spiritual world that spiritual power may flow into it.

Somehow, to come near to Christ has been to draw closer to God. Somehow, being in sympathy with him and, in our poor fashion, attuned to his spirit, has availed to draw from heaven the divine spark that has kindled anew many a fainting and failing heart. We may know but little of these deep matters; yet I can conceive of nothing more shallow, even in a day of rampant superficiality, than the theorizing which sets aside the whole religious experience of our race, as if it were utterly destitute of significance. A race which has sought, through uncounted generations, and with a persistence it has seldom manifested elsewhere, for help from heaven, yet has received nothing in return, and has learned nothing all these years through continued failure, is not such a race as I myself can understand. That, to sad extent, it has sought blindly and foolishly is sufficiently evident upon the face of the record. But there must have been some finding to keep up its heart and courage, otherwise the humanity of the past has been so foolish that I see not how the boastful reason of the present day can own itself the child of those earlier generations.

There is something in religious experience which has been deeply precious and helpful to the souls of men. And whatever that something may be, the person and the influence of Christ have been a most effective means of its attainment. That he is man's only mediator I do not dare to say. But that, for people born and reared as we have been, he is the greatest friend to those "who

would live and walk in the spirit"; the most certain guide for those who wish to approach the Infinite presence, I hold to be, beyond question, true.

I could very easily figure him as a great chief of souls dwelling in that "undiscovered country" before us; and, as such, I should not be ashamed to pray to him, as my Catholic friend would pray to his patron saint. But, so thinking of him, I seem to remove myself too much from the atmosphere of gentleness and grace which belonged to that beauteous life in Palestine. And, if I call him God, that is as if I were to leave the interior of my holy place, where light falls through the great window looking toward the East, and go round to view it from the other side, where the richness of the colors is mostly lost.

To me, therefore, he shall be simply "the man, Christ Jesus." Yet, however he may be fitted to his place in the world's customary order, I shall believe that the wisdom of God has given him his position in a higher spiritual order; that not by accident or fate, but by divine decree, he came to break the bread of life to hungry souls, and to be for you and me a mediator between earth and heaven.

A SAVING FAITH.

What must I do to be saved?—Acts xvi. 30.

There are two incidents, told in the Gospels, in which very nearly this same question was put to Christ himself. There the question was, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" and this, no doubt, is very much what the jailer meant, in the story about the apostles, when he asked, "What shall I do to be saved?"

Of the two men who brought this question to Jesus, one was a lawyer, and the other a certain "young ruler," which probably means a chief official of some synagogue,—a position roughly corresponding to that of vestryman in the English social system. The lawyer, probably, was in no wise anxious about the state of his soul. He asked the question more to see what this new and rather unconventional rabbi would say than because he was solicitous with regard to his standing in the spiritual world. To him, therefore, the Master did not pay very special attention. He asked the lawyer, in turn, what he considered the great commandment of the law; and, when the lawyer answered that it was to love God and his neighbor, he made the simple comment: "Thou hast answered rightly: this do, and thou shalt live."

When the young ruler came to Christ with this same question upon his lips, it was a different matter; and he received a different reply. He came, not investigating this new teacher, to see what manner of man he might be, but with a burdened soul, genuinely seeking light and

help. "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" This is the language of heartfelt supplication. Indeed, so lowly and so eager was his manner that Jesus was a little startled, and exclaimed, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but God." And then, taking more close account of this young man, the Master at first referred him also to the commandments. And he, hoping for something more, some new truth which had not hitherto reached his dissatisfied heart, said (no doubt, sadly enough) that he had "kept all these from his youth up." Evidently, he had not found in them what he longed to find. There was a hunger within him still unmet. He had sought this new teacher of divine things, hoping that he might know how to reach the source of his anxiety and discontent. And when Jesus spoke to him of the commandments, it was as if one suffering from a wasting disease should seek the help of a new physician, only to be asked to try over again the same old nostrums which he had used so long without producing any cure.

Then, it is said, the Master, looking upon him, loved him. He began to see into this young man's soul, and was ready to prescribe for his need. You remember what followed,—how the young ruler was bidden to part with his earthly wealth, and went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. This is commonly read, I fancy, with the emphasis in the wrong place. The command, "Sell what thou hast and give to the poor," is taken as if that were intended to be the answer to the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" It is nothing of the sort. Jesus never cared whether a man were rich or poor. He recognized the burdens and temptations which riches are apt to bring. But he never

taught or meant to teach that there was any peculiar saintliness in poverty. The command, or invitation, really addressed to this young man's need was, "Come, follow me!" The Master saw in him one fit to be a bearer of his message to the world, if he could make the great decision, and knew that by giving himself to that work he would find all his mental darkness turned to light. Parting with his worldly possessions was merely an incident of what Christ proposed to him, not the essence of the transaction.

In accordance with the custom of the time any teacher who talked to men about God had to go to them in the guise of poverty. Nobody would have listened to him, had he not virtually broken every earthly tie, in order to preach whatever message he had to give. Jesus adopted a manner of life which made him wholly dependent on the charity of the people among whom he moved,—not because he invented that way of living or because he held it especially virtuous, but because this was what he had to do, to gain the ear of the people. When he told this young man to get rid of his wealth, it was only as if, in asking him to take a certain journey, he had bidden him to put on the coat that was appropriate for such an excursion. The real answer to the young man's question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" is found, and found only, in the words, "Come, follow me!"

And now let us consider that later incident, when the apostles of Christ had taken his gospel out into the world at large, and one asked of them, "What must I do to be saved?" It was in Philippi, where Paul and Silas had come on one of their missionary journeys. As was often the case, they soon found themselves in conflict both with the orthodox Jews and with the Roman author-

ties. On a trifling and trumped-up charge they had been publicly whipped, and cast into prison. In the night-time there was an earthquake which so shook the place that the locks of the doors were unloosed, and all who were confined might have embraced the opportunity to escape. Whether this earthquake had anything to do with Paul and Silas or merely happened to arrive at that moment is a question upon which there is here no time to enter. The answer to that, either way, cannot be made so conclusive as most people, perhaps, are inclined to think. The jailer, of course, looked upon it as a supernatural occurrence. He must have felt, before this, as no doubt many others felt, that Paul and Silas were very uncommon men; and he would have had no hand in any persecution of them, save that he was overawed by the cruel and relentless mob-spirit, which had led the attack.

But, face to face with what he could only regard as a visible demonstration that the power of God was with them, this jailer could no longer hesitate. As between the disfavor of the mob and the displeasure of Deity, he knew that it would be safer to dare the enmity of men. So he came trembling to Paul and Silas, and, falling down before them, asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and they answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." We have, then, the three incidents before us. To the lawyer Jesus said in effect, "Love God and man, and all shall be well with you!" To the young ruler he said, "Come, follow me!" To the Roman jailer Paul and Silas answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

I think we must conclude, for one thing, that no exclusive way of salvation is here set before us. The

weight in the counsels of the nation; that, if men of to-day would take the spirit of his precepts and his deeds for their pattern and their guide, then the nation would be thereby saved from follies within and from foes without.

Or one may say: "I believe on Abraham Lincoln. I believe that he also was, in some sense, a providential man; that he came to stand at the head of this people in a period of great crisis, as if God had sent him to answer the country's need. I believe that no other man of his generation could have performed equally well the service that he rendered; that but for his wise and careful guidance, in the hour of danger, there was waiting for us, as a nation, almost inevitable shipwreck. I believe in the kind of man that Lincoln was,—patient, unpretentious, self-forgetful, slow of speech; prudent, when, in view of existing uncertainties, no man had a right to be rash; and utterly fearless, when the path of duty had been plainly disclosed to him. I believe in his qualities of mind and of heart, as those which ought to be made the ideal of statesmanship and of good citizenship everywhere; and I believe that approaching our problems, as he approached the problems of his time,—taking up great issues in the spirit and the temper that marked his course,—we shall find a safe path through them to something better in days to come." Is not this a good creed for Americans to hold? And in what other sense can we think that Paul and Silas asked a Roman official to believe on Christ? They asked him to believe first of all, that Jesus of Nazareth was what he claimed to be,—God's servant and son; one who knew the will of God concerning his children on earth, and could teach them the way of eternal life. They asked him to believe that this great teacher was not, as his enemies had

charged, a mere babbler and dreamer; a disturber of ancient ways and of the world's peace: a sorcerer, in league with the prince of evil spirits; or a mere nobody, whom a set of fanatics had taken up, to be the representative of strange and uncouth doctrines; but that he was, instead, the most wonderfully endowed person who had ever been born into the world; by whose example and teaching, men everywhere might find light and leading through earth's perplexities, safe into the glory which God had prepared for them in a world to come.

If one will read the New Testament, forgetting the controversies that have since attended the growth of the Church, I think he must feel that this statement covers fairly well the faith in Christ there advocated and displayed. No reference is made, in these earliest Christian writings, to any of those elaborate doctrines which have seemed so important to a later world. What is there insisted upon, over and over, is simple belief in him,—belief in the reality of his message, in the divineness of his personal life, in the sufficiency of his guidance, for all who become his disciples and followers.

And that, it appears to me, has been the real essence of Christian faith in all subsequent time. We are reminded, by historical students, that the controversies of the past have had their place in the development of a Christian consciousness; that, as man is a thinking being, his religion must present to him great thoughts, which satisfy his reasoning powers. No doubt, this is true; and the attempt to give intellectual form to the content of experience is one of much significance. But also it needs to be remembered that to live in the spirit is a far higher aim than to have thoughts about the life of

the spirit, and that the Christian world manifests a certain disposition to believe things alleged to be true about Christ rather than to have faith in him.

During those years when creeds were in the making, when ideas now said to be so important to religious philosophy were being hammered out in turbulent church councils, there was not much growth of anything that could be recognized as a Christian spirit. On the contrary, they were years marked by scandalous conflicts, by ruthless persecutions, by the loss rather than the gain of that charitable mind which should dominate all Christian fellowship. I am not willing to underrate anything which belongs to the unfolding of man's intellectual life; but I must think that the real "salt" of the Christian movement, from the beginning, has been in those souls which have cared less about the formal doctrines of the Church than for their faith in the person of Christ, —as they have learned to know him through the story of his life.

If I understand the purpose of that movement of revolt now being felt throughout the Church, it is not so much to make war on special dogmas as to protest against that reign of dogma which has too much taken the place of the reign of Christ. It has no particular interest to destroy this or that belief about the founder of Christianity which any heart may cherish, though it has a very special interest to maintain that they who wish to enroll themselves under Christ's banner ought not to be judged by the presence or absence of these beliefs in their minds. In these days one man makes a special point of saying that he believes in miracles, and another man is equally emphatic in saying that he does not believe in them. But the burning question,

so far as the future of Christianity is concerned, appears to me to lie not between these two, but is rather whether they who differ on questions like these cannot still unite in saying that they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems to me that they can and that they ought, and that such agreement is of far more consequence to themselves and to mankind than all the matters on which they disagree.

I observe that, where Christian thought has long taken the impress which the great creeds of the Church have given it, there is a certain timidity about trusting to the simple historic record of the Gospels. "Can the Christ there portrayed hold men fast?" it seems to be asked. "Must there not be some mystical figure in addition to that? Must not the Man of Nazareth be carried forward to his seat at the right hand of the throne of God, in order to have rule over human hearts?" That is a question on which no one has a right to dogmatize. But I can conceive of no more important mission which the people called Unitarians now have than just to testify that among them, generations have been reared in simple faith on the Christ of the New Testament, and that this has been found a faith sufficient for their utmost need.

There is no definition of the spiritual life, or of spiritual things, which so reaches the hearts of men, be they ignorant or wise, as does the glowing picture of a soul whose meat and drink it has been to do God's will. And when one is well assured that such a picture represents an actual life once lived among men, when he believes on that as the pattern which a divine wisdom has given for the help of a blind and struggling world, I know not how the higher life can be brought before him in more commanding form.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Take him for your guide, and, if you are able to follow him, you cannot go astray. His spirit shall lead you to what is good and pure and true in this present world. He will tell you that they who walk in his steps follow a path which leads to everlasting blessedness and peace.

THE CURE OF EVIL.

Overcome evil with good.—ROMANS xii. 21.

The man of affairs is wont to allege against many schemes which idealists propose, that they are not adapted to the kind of world we are living in. Human nature is such that no plan of that kind could be made to work. And very often he is perfectly right. Theorists who exercise their inventive genius upon the social mechanism are quite apt to leave the human factor of the problem altogether out of their reckoning. If you say to a thoroughgoing socialist, for example, that as men now are his scheme could not be successfully put in practice, he will probably rejoin that human nature has nothing to do with the matter, since it is only an economic question. And in so far as the idealist does deal with human nature, he is rather apt to idealize that. He will tell you that men are to be judged by the best that is in them, not by their worst; which is perfectly true when we are talking of them as spiritual beings, but not so true when one is estimating their probable course of action as political agents, or as candidates for positions of financial trust. There is undoubtedly a tendency among the builders of Utopias to exaggerate the virtues of our common humanity, as compared with its vices and weaknesses, and to assume, somewhat rashly, that its better nature will rise to the level of every new opportunity presented to it. If men had the angelic disposition to match the plans for uni-

versal brotherhood and peace presented to us, the tangles and snarls of this old world's life could be quite easily straightened out. Alas! that lack of good disposition constitutes the most baffling and difficult part of our problem. We may pass the appropriate legislation to bring in the kingdom of heaven; but the kingdom does not come. Men stubbornly refuse to be what the new reform assumed they were going to be, and we are left very much where we were before.

But now, there was one idealist, and the very prince of all idealists, who did not make any mistake through failing to see what men actually were. He sent a band of his disciples out on their first missionary tour, partly it would seem for their own training and instruction in the work he must presently commit to their hands; and almost the first word of his counsel, as he gave them instructions how to conduct themselves, was "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." There is abundant evidence in the brief story of his life, that he was not looking upon the world of men through any rose-colored glasses, which tinged them with an artificial glory. Indeed, if we understand him rightly, he was not given to fancies and dreams about anybody, or anything. The basis of all his greatness was that he saw things as they were. "Idealist," we have called him, and so he was. But he was also an uncompromising realist. He had no romantic mist to hang over life's actual realities in order to disguise their forbidding features, but he looked straight into the heart of the life surrounding him and saw what it truly was.

"As sheep in the midst of wolves," he bade his disciples go forth, and told them to "beware of men." If they were disposed to look forward to the great things

they might do, and the good times they might have, he made short work of sweeping away all such pleasant anticipations. They were being sent out on a difficult and dangerous and, on the whole, a rather thankless task. They might be welcomed and received by a few, but they were to be prepared for rebuffs on every hand. More than that, they might have to face active persecution. Quite likely they would find themselves within the clutches of the law and be treated as common malefactors. They were therefore told to be wary of their steps; to watch out for the dangers to which they were exposed; to be "wise as serpents" in evading, as much as possible, the attacks that would be made upon them. At the same time they were to maintain, to the utmost, their own pacific character. Nothing of the wolf must show in them, when they were set upon by a wolfish world. Certainly he gave them a hard part to play, whatever he may have thought of their ability to perform it. The wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of doves are attributes not easily combined in the same mind. Many a man does now go forth into the world as a sheep in the midst of wolves. But too often he does not long retain that innocent and inoffensive nature. He presently learns to be something of a wolf himself, and finds that the easiest, if not the only way to get on with the situation.

But it was plainly not the purpose of Christ to have his sheep change their character when they were falsely accused, and cast out of the synagogues, or even scourged for teaching what was not in agreement with the commonly accepted religion. For, in a word, they were heretics among people who both hated and feared any departure from the faith they had been taught. It is

not easy, even in these softened times, to be a heretic and witness for an unpopular faith, without yielding one's mind to some bitterness and scorn. It is not easy to suffer from the world's stupidity and bigotry, and preserve an entirely charitable frame of mind toward people who will not see the truth when it is placed before their eyes. But that was what Jesus asked of his followers; that they should go as sheep among wolves, and remain sheep, whatever provocation there might be to answer scorn for scorn, or to give blow for blow.

Now the question is, Why did he judge this worth while? for, on the face of it, it seems rather a foolish proceeding. Sheep among wolves? Why, the wolves will eat the sheep; that is the swift and certain end of such a mission. Would it not seem that the only sheep who can do any good to such a company is the one who has in him, or is willing to put on, enough of the wolf so that he can hold his own, and maintain his standing, against the attack that is sure to be made upon him? What is the use of merely lying down and letting the world trample over you at its own will and pleasure? Who is benefited by any such practice of non-resistance to evil? On the contrary, is not the evil man more confirmed in his ways when he encounters no effective opposition to his course? And does not he who fails to stand up for his rights, when they are ruthlessly invaded, still further jeopardize the weak and defenceless, everywhere, who may be open to the same kind of attack? Does he not owe it to those who might suffer more than himself, that he should meet injustice with all the opposing force he can command, and thus interpose a shield between the aggressor and others who would probably be the next victims of his bad intent?

This surely is the common-sense view of the matter, which nobody, I should think, can refute; and which is often set forth as an answer to the maxims of the New Testament; as if it convicted Christ of foolish and impractical teaching. It is all, however, beside the mark, so far as his purpose was concerned. They who think they have thus put away Christian ethics as something they are not required to reckon with, do not appear to have understood, in the least, the great truth which Jesus was trying to illustrate and enforce. They seem to think that he had in mind only to give an example of what he regarded as the most perfect personal righteousness; that his aim, like that of the Pharisee, was to show how the individual soul could present itself spotless in the sight of God; only the Pharisee had one picture of what constituted such perfection of conduct and character, and he had another. Now, in reality, that was not the purpose of Christ. His constant and all-absorbing thought was for the world's salvation. What he wanted to do was to cure the world of its sin. With his thought of God it was not so tremendously important that the soul should be letter-perfect in the lesson here given it to learn. His Father in heaven was no martinet given to imposing heavy fines for trifling infringement of his commands. So that one's spirit was right, he was not greatly troubled about the establishment of good relations between that soul and God. But he was deeply concerned with the problem of the world's sin. When the spirit of men was not right, how could it be made what it ought to be? When there was any root of bitterness, or cruelty, or evil desire, planted in the human heart, how could it be plucked up, so that it should cease to bear its bad fruit? For

what he had in mind was not merely to save as many as possible out of an impending shipwreck, but to make a new kingdom of heaven among men, in which evil should find its perfect cure.

We have pretty much settled down into the notion that this world of ours, in spots at least, is incurably bad; that, at the very best, it must still contain a very large amount of misery and vice and crime. But Jesus did not entertain that idea. We need not now stop to debate the question whether he was right, or we are right. But at all events, in order to understand him, we must conceive that he hoped for a world in which evil should be utterly abolished. He did not mean merely to restrict the wrong to as narrow limits as might be, or to devise means for repairing its ravages. He meant to kill it at its very source; to destroy it altogether; not only in the lives of a few, or a majority, but in the universal life of man, and to have a world which was entirely free from its taint. This, of course, makes him seem, to many, a mere dreamer. And a dream in one sense it was. But it was a thoroughly rational dream, because he had thought out a method by which to achieve his end; and we have no right to say that his purpose was merely visionary, till the method he proposed has been adequately tried out; which it never yet has been.

Let us see first that what he proposed was nothing less than the absolute and final cure of evil in the hearts of men, and that this purpose of his is the right and proper key to apply to our interpretation of all his words. Then I know not how we can more briefly or adequately describe the method he proposed for the world to adopt, than to take the words of his great disciple and Apostle Paul, "overcome evil with good." The fact is that

this saying indicates the only possible cure for what is wrong in the world's life that has ever been heard of. You can do a great deal with evil by way of holding it in check, and beating it down to relatively small proportions, by using force against it. It can be frightened, and overawed, and driven into holes and corners of the earth, where it does not much show itself. This is the common method of dealing with it; the only method perhaps which the majority of humankind has thus far conceived of. And it is doubtless the method which, under the exigencies of the situation, we are driven to adopt, because there is no other that we are yet able to apply on an adequate scale. But one thing about this method can now be stated with absolute certainty; it does not, and cannot, cure. It may cut evil down to the root, as one would cut off the top of a noxious weed; and by keeping after it continually, much growth of that sort can be prevented. But the root is still there, ready to spring up in full vigor the moment that warfare upon it is relaxed.

Now the good husbandman does not want to be forever expending the full force of his labor chopping down and keeping under troublesome weeds. He wants to clear his soil of them altogether; to eradicate the very seeds out of which they spring. And Christ wanted to do just that for the great field of human life; that is to say, to abolish the very sources of iniquity in the human heart. It was a stupendous design; perhaps the most daring project that the mind of man ever formed. The thought is so vast and far-reaching that, even yet, when we are brought face to face with it we are most apt to be staggered by it, as if it were something totally against nature, and forever impossible of fulfilment.

But it is in the light of that thought that we need to read his words about non-resistance to evil. What he was forever seeking to illustrate and make plain was that, however the bad element of life might be temporarily crippled, by the application of violence, the only way to put it out of existence was to overcome it with good. The only real cure for it must be found in kindness and love.

The evil man may be rendered helpless and harmless, for the time being, in a variety of ways. But most of these ways are apt to leave him at heart an evil man still, and, with opportunity, his old nature reasserts itself. If we want really to change his nature, there is but one method that ever did, or ever could, accomplish that. Somewhere he must meet the spirit of goodness, without arms in its hands, without any aspect of menace or threat; the spirit that looks upon him in pure gentleness and compassion, till he is captured and captivated by it, and throws down all his defences to give it welcome to his heart. If we could now meet that great Master of men to expostulate with him about his counsel, that when smitten on one cheek we should turn the other to our assailant, I think he would listen very patiently to our arguments about the necessity of holding evil in restraint. But then he would ask us, "What are you going to do with and for that bad man when you have restrained him?"

Because that, perhaps, is the main difference between the world and him. The world is satisfied just to hold off the iniquity by which it is threatened. It lives, as many natives in India live, surrounded by jungle that is infested with tigers; never dreaming that it is other than a fixed and irrevocable law of nature that there

shall be tigers, and that they should more or less take their toll of human life. It is only a question of getting them somehow shot or scared away when they become too troublesome. So we mostly think about evil, that there is no getting rid of it; and all we can hope to do is to prevent it from becoming too deadly a menace to our common welfare. But what Christ proposes to the world is that, at last, it should banish this awful presence entirely: and he pointed out the way for accomplishing that deliverance. He was not thinking of any temporary expedient for securing comparative safety from its attacks. These are obvious enough to anybody. He was thinking of the radical and final cure. And that, if we can ever learn to apply it, is just where he said it was: in the power of the good spirit to cast out demons of hate and lust and greed by simple word of command.

There are certain kinds of evil in the world that simply cannot be hunted out of existence. There ought to be at this late day no need of a voice from heaven to tell us this. Perhaps the unthinking will still join in this hunt under the impression that they are thus engaged in a war of extermination. But no thoughtful mind now supposes that mere punishment can ever accomplish the world's reform. Either we settle down into the conviction that no great reform is possible; that Christ's thought of the kingdom of heaven among men is nothing but what one politician called it, "an iridescent dream," or we turn, more and more, to take up his method of overcoming evil with good. And that, we should understand, will demand all the faith, and patience, and heroism, and self-sacrifice, which the life of Christ manifests to us; and which our common humanity, by utmost en-

deavor, can summon to its aid. It means an immense, indeed, an immeasurable amount of patient sufferance of wrong. Somebody must go as sheep among wolves. Somebody must bear scorn and reproach without answering back in kind. Somebody must submit, uncomplainingly, to a great deal of injustice and wrong. Somebody must be infinitely patient with the wrong ideas and the low cunning that so much obtain possession of the feebler kinds of human intelligence. Somebody must show a divine capacity to keep on working for men, bearing and forgiving their infirmities, though they turn only to strike down the hand that is extended to them loaded with benefits.

In these days we frequently hear it said that no decent man can any longer go into politics, or stand for public office; because that subjects him to a degree of vilification and abuse which no self-respecting person ought to be asked to face. As if public life had ever been anything else but a kind of continual martyrdom! The greatest and purest and wisest have accepted that path, in which they carried as heavy a cross as their shoulders could well bear. Whatever they thought beforehand, they found when they entered upon the task to which they were committed, that, instead of being a joyous enterprise, it was one whose heavy yoke must wear into their very souls. Think what men like Washington and Lincoln suffered, in rendering to mankind the services they performed! It was not only that they had terrible responsibilities to bear, or that more shameful abuse was heaped upon them than most criminals have to endure; but hands that should have been helpful and friendly were stretched out only to pluck them down, and pile new obstacles in their way.

To greater or less extent that has always been the story of the great benefactors of our race. There never was a time when public service could be honestly and purely performed, otherwise than in frequent anguish of heart. No man was ever yet set in public place, whether large or small, without finding that, doing his duty, he must accept enough misunderstanding and reproach to weigh him down, sometimes, with discouragement and sorrow.

Who are we that we should be spared what good and true men and women have always endured; or be made exempt from our part of that price which has always been paid, to lift the world a little higher out of its sin and wrong? There is no short cut for humanity from its low estate to the high places of the spirit. There is no possible scheme of compulsion to be put in force that will mechanically deliver it from its distress. Little by little it will have to be redeemed by the heart's blood of those who are willing to give the service which no reward can repay. Step by step its evil will have to be overcome by the spirit of goodness that has found shelter in our human hearts; as by its very helplessness, in the grasp of ruthless power, it shames the brutality which overmasters and despoils it.

At this very moment there are ruin and desolation, freshly made in this world, preaching to all men, with more eloquence than human speech could ever command, lessons which our humanity must at last learn, though it has been so slow to see their import. Such suffering is not in vain. It is not outside the providence of a wise and loving God. The tragedy of Calvary is enacted, over and over, in the life of the world; and always the crucified one rises from the tomb, to which misguided men have consigned him, in new spiritual power. We are not

to think that Christ discovered and put in operation any new method for accomplishing the world's redemption. He simply made plain, to all who will learn of him, what has been God's way for doing this work, since men first came into existence; and what must continue to be his way while the world endures. The difference he has made is that he enables us to see the divine intent; to work consciously and intelligently with the divine purpose, instead of being its mere unwilling and unseeing instruments. The man of to-day, when he tries to do good and is met and baffled at every turn, or when he offers the best that is in him, only to be met with ridicule and neglect, ought not to be astonished as if some strange and unheard-of thing had happened to him. He ought not to feel that the world is made all wrong when, for the moment, vice flaunts itself abroad in open triumph, and goodness languishes like one in prison. The mightiest spiritual forces we know cry to us out of such captivity. It is even in their very weakness that they have been made strong; for such power is in them to overcome evil with good.

Over and over it is certified to us what strength there may be in the spirit of human love and pity, even when its patience is well-nigh exhausted and it stands defeated and at loss, to melt the strong and rebellious heart which has refused to let it in. From this very reading desk not long since the story was told of a woman's life gone wrong, one which neither love nor discipline could touch, till, in sheer despair, one who had tried to save wept over her; when instantly all her barriers against the good were completely and finally thrown down. That little incident stands for an infinite force that remains to be applied to the healing of the world's sin and

woe. If we cannot have that faith, then what, in heaven's name, have we to live for; and how is human life, anywhere or in anything, worth while? Is it great to live seeing so much wretchedness about us, and feeling that nothing can ever be done about it; only hiding the spectacle from our eyes as much as possible by what games and amusements we can find? But if we can see at the end of the years, even though it be ever so far away, some such vision as Christ saw: that of a world of men all living as the best and wisest and purest can live now; in the happiness of complete love and trust, and entirely free from strife; and if we can be sure that our patience, and forbearance, and sacrifice of self, will add the smallest grain to that highway that is being built, by which mankind will pass over to its rightful home in that better land of the spirit, then it is really great to live.

Perhaps it may not seem much that any of us can do, just now, to overcome evil with good, yet it is much if we can do anything that even looks in that direction. We are as those who build, bit by bit, in faith, the foundation for what is to be the greatest of all human arts and accomplishments. Some day, where we so laboriously and so fruitlessly strive to put a new soul into human weakness, and shiftlessness, and frivolity; working so hard, with such small returns, to make this world a little better and brighter for our living in it; some day the wonderful power of Christ to put new life into dead hearts by his very presence and his very word, will be again recovered; and many shall do the "greater works" that he said his followers might do.

It is in hope of that blessed day that we are called upon to try, and keep on trying, to overcome evil with good.

All honor to every brave soul which must bear a load of pain and care of which the world little knows, and still in patient forbearance does its work without bitterness and without despair. No one can say what sum of such heroism the world's conquest by the spirit may yet involve and require. One does know that no finer pledge can be given of man's right to be ranked with the highest spiritual nobility, than his capacity thus to bear the hard consequence of other's wrongs. One knows that the very victims of man's cruelty and injustice must be thus helping to purchase, at last, the redemption even of the perpetrators of those hideous deeds here done beneath the Sun. We can do this for those whom we love, though they have not greatly prized our love. We can do it for those who have looked upon us only with eyes of hate; and no vengeance that it is within our power to mete out to them can begin to be as sweet as will be the conquest we may hope to win, through fidelity to Christ's commands.

COURAGE.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart.—PSALM xxxi. 24.

Whatever the virtue of courage may be, and however it is to be defined, it ought to be clearly distinguished from a quality which often gets called by its name; that is, to say, from a mere insensibility to the presence of danger, which it certainly is not. There are minds with so little imagination that they do not see what risks they run. There are physical organisms but little sensitive to pain or without experience to tell them what pain is. Obviously, in such cases there is no real virtue in being able to face suffering and peril without flinching. If I do not know that I am standing over a powder magazine, but suppose myself to be treading on innocent and harmless earth, I am not deserving of special praise because I walk or stand there without perturbation or alarm.

Youth receives a good deal of commendation for its courage, which it does not altogether deserve. This rather characteristic trait of the young mind is partly due to inexperience and ignorance, resulting in some measure from the fact that it does not much see or realize the dangers it so calmly confronts. There is always a type of social reformer who thinks himself immensely courageous, when, in fact, he is merely reckless. Other people warn him of catastrophes which he may be helping to produce, but he turns a deaf ear to all such hints of danger. He is as a person with no knowledge of fire-damp in a mine, who, spite of all cautions addressed

to him, insists upon walking through one of those underground passages with a naked light in his hands. He does not see anything to cause alarm, and he believes that they who talk to him of a great calamity which may suddenly spring forth out of the darkness are persons who have an interested motive for trying to scare him back from his investigations, or who are frightened by mere shadows of their own brain.

The lion used to be called a courageous animal, and, indeed, got his name of "king of beasts" because it was supposed that he would fearlessly attack human beings wherever he found them. Now, when it is discovered that he will generally escape from the presence of man if possible, it is quite the fashion to call him cowardly. The truth appears to be that, when the lion knew nothing of hunters with guns in their hands, he was an extremely dangerous animal for man to meet; though, now that he has had experience of what guns can do, he is generally wary of an antagonist of whom he has learned that he is probably thus armed. But, instead of being called less courageous, he ought to be called more courageous than he was formerly supposed to be; for no boldness was required on his part to meet a danger of which he was totally ignorant, and, now that he does know what man can do to him, he is still capable of meeting his human foe with splendid daring when he finds that he cannot escape from the encounter.

Courage properly begins with knowledge of the danger in one's way. It is not so much absence of caution and fear as the power to subdue apprehension in the presence of dangerous risks, and to act with calmness and strength notwithstanding the perils that must be faced. One might even venture upon a paradox and say that the

greatest courage requires to have, as its reverse side, a corresponding timidity. There must be some sinking of heart to overcome or a confident bearing has no moral significance; and that kind of composure which the mind acquires, through self-command, is far more to be depended upon in an emergency than any amount of bravado, when there is no real feeling of fear. Many a man in time of war, it would appear, has gone into his first battle with unfaltering heart, but has come out of it so cowed and shaken that he would thenceforth resort to any meanness and subterfuge rather than face that ordeal again; while many another man has marched to the fight with white cheeks and trembling limbs, but has stayed there to the end of the contest, and has been ready again and again to expose himself to an enemy's bullets, whenever the summons came.

Courage, properly speaking, is not the absence of fear and dread: it is being able to suppress the panic which fear and dread tend to cause, and to act in contempt of the suggestions they are sure to make. You will notice that the Psalmist's exhortation says, "Be of good courage,"—as if we could have courage or not, just as we pleased. And, indeed, that is what seems to be true. At all events, people who do have it acquire it for themselves. It does not come to them as a natural gift. "Assume a virtue, if you have it not," may often be good counsel. But in this case the assuming is the virtue. No person of good intelligence walks without seeing whither he is going. No person of sense, when his path leads him into deadly peril, but feels that he would rather be somewhere else. But virtue begins in him when he says to himself, "This is my post, and I must stick to it, whatever happens." He assumes the hardihood which he

does not altogether feel, and does his duty in defiance of all foes that rise up against him. That is what I understand true courage to be; and it is far more admirable, as it is far more certain to carry through the thing it has in hand, than the kind of fortitude which consists merely in ignorance of the issue to be met.

But now this is not the whole story from the Psalmist's point of view. "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart." Put on this determination to support bravely the battle to which you are committed, whatever its consequences may be; and then, however weak you are, strength shall come to you, out of the unseen, to make you equal to your task. This is the religious view of life, which does not speak to men from a basis of mere theory alone, but out of abundance of experience, and therefore is entitled to their consideration and respect.

The contrasted beliefs of atheism and religion come back at last essentially to this: the one professes no knowledge of moral or spiritual power, save that which man gets out of himself, while the other teaches him to depend upon a strength greater than his own. There may be Gods, the Eastern sage said, but they are impotent to do us any good. The one resource of humanity, in its life-struggle, is its own wit and its own will. Where these may carry it, it can go; and beyond the limits of their range it cannot pass. That is the atheistic view of life, which cannot, of course, prove or demonstrate its negative position, but which remains stubbornly unconvinced of the reality of anything akin to the human spirit outside of human minds. Religion, on the other hand, affirms the existence of some kind of spiritual world beyond the society of minds which we have here on earth.

It believes that the great deeps of being are filled with a power which is like that manifested in our consciousness. It cannot conceive that the mind in us, or even in others like us who may inhabit other worlds, should be the only mind which this vast Universe contains. It thinks that always we are in close contact with this other world, so that without our knowledge its influences are always flowing into us and flooding our being, as we are able to make use of them; and that there are ways by which we can secure and utilize, in larger measure, this help from the unseen.

This essential belief of the religious mind expresses itself under a multitude of forms, but they are always of secondary consequence; the fundamental question being, "Is there any life, or power, above and beyond our spirits, which is so far of kin to them that it is as a reservoir from which they may draw a new supply of life and strength?" Atheism has no means of knowing that this is not true. It has no rational and consistent world to set before the mind with the affirmations of religion left out. It has nothing but its everlasting doubt whether, in any event, this is a rational and consistent world, and its contrary opinion that the case of religion is not proven.

The religious mind, on the other hand, believing that there is a reason why the world exists, has to offer something like a reasonable explanation why things are as they are. With its seen world, surrounded by the unseen, it is able to present a whole of being which is not a mere idle and aimless exhibition of power. Above all, religion, in addition to its theoretical basis, has a great wealth of human experience to plead on its behalf, which ought to commend its assertions with special force to

an age which esteems itself, beyond everything else, practical. Religion says, not only that man ought to be able to find help outside himself and the life of his kind, but that great numbers of men and women have actually found such help.

Some part of this testimony, as offered, is, no doubt, such as the modern world will not and cannot receive. But there is an immense deal of it which speaks, to any fair mind, with tremendous weight and force. At the least it may be said that religion has a case which it is worth while for everybody to put to the test. "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart." That is not merely the word of an old Hebrew poet, coming to us from a long-vanished past. It is the voice of a vast body of experience which testifies, out of all races and in every age (including our own), of a help from on high which seconds man's endeavor toward a higher life, and turns his weakness into strength.

Why not, then, make some trial of a way so abundantly recommended to us! One can scarcely read the patent medicine advertisements printed in our daily papers without feeling some disposition to try, in one's own case, the remedies which seem to have relieved so much suffering, even though his judgment goes all the other way. Why is it, then, that we are so slow to try what religion commends to us? It is true that, when we think of subduing our wild and wayward hearts to that pattern of life which our own ideals suggest to us, we may well be appalled by the size of that task. But here comes religion to tell us that the work is not ours alone; that there are other and mightier influences, stronger than our wills, just as much interested as we are in the higher welfare of our souls; and that, when we really begin the work of self-

discipline, these other agencies come instantly to our assistance. Probably the first impulse of almost every human being is to accept himself as he is, and not to try to break through very much the limitations that hedge him in. He is such a mere beginner in the art of living! and the kingdom of the heart is such a stubborn, elusive province to subdue! Well may he be in despair of doing much with it, while the responsibility seems to rest on him alone.

The first word likely to produce much impression on that despairing impulse is like that which we have been here quoting,—“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.” It is said that in many cases a determination to live—a belief in one’s recovery—is a large element of the forces that make for returning health. Yet how impossible it is that this determination should take the form of simple will-power to banish disease! The thought, “I am going to be well again,” must needs mean, “There are powers at work, far deeper than any which my conscious will can direct and which are going to make me once more well and strong.” So in the faintness and sickness of the spirit it is not in us to think that by mere stress of will we can lift ourselves out of that depression. But it is given us to trust that, where by our will we make an opening for it, there is something like a great tide of health and strength waiting to flow into us; and that, we may understand, is what the Psalmist meant when he said, “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart.”

As to the worth of this virtue of courage, it may be said that for scarcely any other mental quality does life make such constant demand, and that the possession of it is a good half of success in almost every situation with

which we are called to deal. It has its active and its passive sides. Great fortitude is required of us not only to attack, but to resist. There are times when the call is to go forward, to do something positive for which the hour has come. There are other times when nothing is to be done but only to stand still, and meet, as best one can, forces which threaten to sweep us quite out of their path. There are situations from which courage may pluck a great immediate gain, and other situations in which it is only courageous to accept defeat at the hands of fortune rather than listen to promises of dishonorable profit.

We frequently require courage, if we are to be saved from our enemies, and not infrequently we need that virtue equally to save us from our friends. Indeed, one of the hardest tasks that can ever be laid upon us is to withstand a blind unreasoning sentiment, which proves to be no aggressive power, but only a soft and pleading antagonist. It takes a bold man to meet with kindness and firmness those currents of emotion which are forever getting themselves into false courses, and to stand against them, like a rock in mid-channel, breasting their impetuous waves aside into a safer path.

One way or another, life is continually testing us at every point, as if to ask of us, "How much courage do you possess?" as if one of the main interests of the wisdom which fixed this earthly discipline were to provoke or stimulate us to the exercise of fortitude. So great a part of our equipment for the race and warfare of life is this virtue that its mere counterfeit often goes far, and wins a temporary honor that is denied to much more meritorious claimants. That kind of person whom we call a "plunger"—the man who has the nerve to set everything

at stake upon the turn of a dice—cannot, in the nature of the case, have a long career of success or renown. But for a time his courage may carry him where men of far greater ability, but of hesitating mood, are unable to make their way.

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread”; and sometimes it is not exactly to the credit of the angels that they are afraid, as it may sometimes need to be said of the fools that, however they lack judgment, at all events they are truly brave. One of the besetting weaknesses of cultivated humanity is that it is so easily scared by the appalling risks which its clearer vision more surely discerns; and nobody needs more the exhortation, “Be of good courage,” than do those intellectual classes of our society to whom it must often seem as if the whole world were bent on self-destruction.

And, beyond all question of getting this world’s work done in creditable fashion, there is a further probable reason why courage is so much required of us. Courage is but another name for self-command; and self-command, whatever its earthly value, may well be the very key to that immortal life to which we look forward as the only satisfactory explanation and completion of what is here begun. If that combination of the elements of being, brought together in our personal consciousness, is to endure the shock of physical dissolution, it must be because that consciousness is still able to hold them together after the bonds of flesh and sense have been destroyed. What degree of self-command this implies, of course, we do not know. Perhaps a very little will suffice. As we believe that God is merciful, we must think he would not put this test so high that few could meet it. But something of power on the part of our wills, to con-

trol the life put under their charge, must surely be required.

At certain seasons of the year it is the religious custom of great numbers of our fellow-Christians to deny themselves some slight indulgence. And their church teaches them that by these small fasts they are somehow getting a more secure hold upon blessedness in the life to come. We, who have fallen out of this practice, are, perhaps, somewhat given to smile at the idea that such small formal sacrifices have any appreciable moral or spiritual value. I think we do wrong to look upon them in such disdain. They might be valueless for us. But I apprehend we have no right to say that, in the lives of thousands and millions of people, even that small amount of self-denial may not ultimately prove of immense consequence as a discipline of self-command.

At all events, the exercise of courage is a most effective discipline to that same end. He who, in any difficult or trying situation, holds his reason steady, his faculties to their wonted use, his passions under firm control, and does the work appointed him to do with steadfast aim, has given a supreme exhibition of the power of self-command.

It is safe to say that no great work was ever accomplished in this world that did not call for a high degree of courage,—especially of that moral courage which is often harder to acquire than physical bravery. Quite as much as any difference in point of intelligence, the different measures of courage which men bring to life's tasks explain their varying success. And in small things as well as great the possession of this virtue is a wondrous help, as the want of it constitutes a fearful drag upon life's activities.

A coward, forever, is both despicable in his own eyes and a heavy burden which others have to bear. Let each one say, when tremblings take hold upon him : "If I will be of good courage, he shall strengthen my heart. If I will make the effort to hold my resolution strong and firm, there are great powers of being that will come to my help." Why should I faint and fall, where such as I am have walked with unfaltering feet? If there is a divine power which could support the great heart of Christ, what time he was being nailed to the cross, let me not doubt that the same hand will hold me up, when I, too, have put myself into its care and keeping.

THE POOR IN SPIRIT.

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
MATT. v. 3.

There have been many assertions in recent years that the Founder of our faith did not like rich men, and cared only for the poor. In a broad sense this may be true enough, and yet we must shrink from the supposition that he cherished anything like that prejudice which peasants in rebellion manifest against all holders of wealth and station. As the son of a carpenter, the young Jesus was not likely to know many rich people. All his earlier associations must have been with those of humble station. When he entered upon his public work, he said that he came to "save the lost." His mission was chiefly addressed to those who had greatest need of his help.

As he rose to fame, he of course attracted the attention of people who were at the top of society; and, reading between the lines, we can see that he had friends among those who were rich in this world's goods. They asked him into their houses, and made feasts for him, which he was invited to join. This could hardly have been true, had he adopted any tone of denunciation against rich people as a class. One young man who came to him he advised to rid himself of all his possessions, coupling the advice with an invitation to become one of his immediate band of followers. But all his disciples had "left all to follow him"; and it does not appear that he asked any other person to dispossess himself of his wealth.

He himself, as a matter of course, had adopted a life of utter poverty. That is what a teacher of divine things

in the East has to do. The people do not listen to one, speaking in the name of the Highest, who comes to them in any other garb. But there is no real evidence that he either regarded poverty in itself as a virtue or looked upon the holding of riches as a crime. One would say that the matter of worldly station and worldly wealth was to him indifferent rather than otherwise. It is hardly to be supposed that for his purposes he cared anything whether a man had much money or had none.

Certainly, we cannot imagine him adopting the least tone of instinctive deference toward one who had large possessions. I should myself be slow to allow that he put the poor man on any pedestal of superior spiritual place. When his clear eyes looked upon a human being, I think, he saw just a man. How that man was dressed was nothing to him, for he looked straight into the heart of his human quality, and everything else was superfluous accident.

But to some things, as an observer of the world about him, he could hardly be blind; and one of these things would be that poverty, at least when not too bitter and extreme, had certain advantages that wealth is apt to lack. It is subject to a spur of necessity which the well-to-do do not commonly feel. "Mankind," said a well-known writer of what I suppose we must now call the last generation,—"mankind is as lazy as it dares to be." The poor, as a rule, cannot dare to be quite so lazy as the rich. It is true that the foolish ideal of gentility, as living without work, has with us entirely passed into oblivion. The rich man to-day is, almost as a matter of necessity, a very hard-working man. This is to some extent his free choice. He finds himself happier in some steady occupation than in merely trying to amuse himself; and

there are innumerable opportunities to labor for the public benefit, which invite him on every side. Still, to guard and keep and manage what he has, under modern conditions of life, involves considerable toil. A kind of necessity rests upon him, too, to be up and doing; and that term "the idle rich," so freely used in certain kinds of current literature, really applies to a very small and somewhat despicable fraction of our own society. I must protest that I know none of whom the term can be rightly used; and I think one must go into the underworld to find them.

But, none the less, there is still a difference between that necessity to which the poor are made subject and the necessity which rests upon the rich. The latter find it a somewhat heavy charge to preserve and utilize wisely what they have. But the former have all to get. They must put forth their utmost energies, first of all, to acquire something before they come to the rich man's problem. And this puts into the poor man's life, when he rouses himself to live his life to the uttermost, a quality of enterprise and adventure rather apt to be lacking in the minds of wealthier classes. Those people who have already obtained the prize cannot be expected to run quite as do those others who have not yet obtained, and before whose eyes that prize continually hangs, a glittering bauble whose desirability fills all their waking thoughts.

As a matter of fact, most of our great discoveries and inventions have been made by comparatively poor men. Columbus, with no means of his own, besieging the Court of Spain to grant him ships, that he might sail to the West, over an unknown ocean, and find the fabled East, is perhaps a sufficient illustration of what I mean. Plenty

of others may have had all the knowledge that Columbus possessed. But no one whose life was reasonably full of interests and attachments, where he stood, was very likely to put them all in jeopardy upon so hazardous an undertaking. He had nothing; and upon his mind therefore this great dream could fasten, to exercise its full lure and charm.

A poor man invents a new way of making pottery, but, as usual, the world is quite sceptical of its worth. A rich man, after some trial, would probably have said, Why should I try to force upon the world what it plainly does not want! But, for this poor man, fame and fortune were at stake. He reduced himself to the verge of starvation, broke up his household furniture to feed his kilns, was ready to burn the very roof that sheltered him, if need be, and at last he did begin to persuade men of the superiority of his wares.

Nowadays we hear talk that poverty is going to be abolished. If, by any means, things can be so ordered that no deserving person need suffer hunger or cold, and none shall lack for proper care in sickness, that surely is something to work for; and we are not so very far from seeing that brought to pass. But, literally, to abolish poverty? That is to bring about a state of society in which no one shall see before him a higher station or a larger store of good things, which he burns to possess! Well, I think it will have to be a quite different world from that of the past before this can be made to work. Too much good has come out of poverty and too much ill has come out of wealth, to make us quite easy at the prospect of seeing the gap between them entirely closed up.

And now, with one more illustration, I think we may be ready to say, quite definitely, what Jesus meant by

his beatitude, Blessed are the poor in spirit! Let the tidings of a new discovery of gold be spread abroad, and who responds to the appeal which these tidings make? Of course, the men who have practically little or nothing, the poor. Mostly, they will be young men whose careers are yet to make. Many will be those who, for one reason or another, have failed in the ordinary game of life, and see in the mines a chance to acquire affluence at a single bound. The "gold fever" is no respecter of persons, only it does not commonly attack a man of means. He may be virtuous or he may be depraved; but, at least, he must be poor.

Christ brought to men tidings of new spiritual riches; and Blessed are you who now feel that you have nothing, he said to them, because you are the ones who will go out to seek and find this great new source of life and peace. He realized perfectly that he could not much reach the minds of those who were entirely content with their spiritual possessions. He must win his following from men and women who knew and felt their spiritual destitution, from people who were hungry of heart for something they had not yet found. Only such were likely to make that new adventure of faith which he asked of them. Accordingly, his band of immediate followers was chosen, mostly, from the poor fishermen who plied their calling on the Lake of Galilee. Though it is said that the common people heard him gladly, few among the rulers of the nation were his friends. And his great apostle, Paul, once called attention to the fact that not many of high station came into the new way, but God would seem rather to have chosen the weak things of earth to confound the things that were mighty.

This is not to say that the contented people of the time

were all wickedly supine in their indifference to Christ's call, or that they were deluded about the worth of what they already had. The point is that, when it became a question of securing a possible spiritual wealth far in excess of any they had dreamed of, and of putting their little store somewhat in hazard to try to attain that larger good, they were not the people to make that venture. It was the poor in spirit who must lead the way, at all events, toward the new country proposed to them. They would be the pioneers to take first possession of that wondrous land of the spirit which he called the "kingdom of heaven."

Now it does not follow, of course, that they who have found a great deal in life with which to be measurably satisfied must altogether lose the spirit of enterprise and adventure. But the natural tendency rather runs that way; and that tendency produces a very serious dead weight to be lifted before any kind of progress is possible. In a general way, we may say, the poor in spirit are they who feel some great spiritual hunger and lack. They are not satisfied with what they have and what they are, as spiritual beings, but are possessed with the idea that somehow there ought to be a great deal more for them, if they knew how to get it.

They who are not poor in spirit, on the other hand, are the people who do not realize any such deficiency in themselves or their spiritual possessions, but are so well content with what they have inherited or attained that they receive with indifference or contempt any suggestion that they might be, spiritually, much further enriched. It needs no argument to show that such people are practically impervious to all influences that would produce in them spiritual growth.

Perhaps an Arab surpasses all the rest of mankind in the perfection of his scorn for works and ways in which he has not been educated. The meanest and poorest camel-driver of the desert is so persuaded of his infinite superiority to the Westerner who sometimes employs him that this latter is frequently dazzled by his colossal self-conceit. Can it be possible, the European or the American asks himself, that this man really has something that justifies his good opinion of himself? If he has, we must reflect, no one has yet discovered it; and it is more probable that his lofty disdain for the Christian stands on little more than profound ignorance of all that Christian civilization represents. But one can see what kind of time the Western world is going to have trying to inoculate the Arab mind with some of its ideas. There must be an open soil before any seed can take root. Poverty of spirit means that the mind is open to new impressions and new invitations that the spirit gives; and in contrast with that we have to set the heart that is case-hardened with complacent pride till it presents a surface of steel to every feeling and thought which suggest to it something better than it has yet known.

It may be said that the poor in spirit are in peril just because they feel themselves so needy and are therefore so ready to listen greedily to any flattering tale that hope may tell. This is of course true. Not only he who holds out to them a true promise of the kingdom of heaven, but he who lures them with a specious trap that he has prepared, too often draws them unresistingly into his toils. We could scarcely say, in the light of many occurrences that are known to us, Blessed are all the poor in spirit! Nevertheless, we must think that a great many

of earth's children are more fortunate than they know in having been born physically poor, and that spiritual poverty is the condition out of which much that is good and great in this world of ours continually springs.

And now let us think for a few moments of that kingdom of heaven which was promised to the poor in spirit. It is matter of record that the first preaching of it did produce enormous results. Somehow, as the thought of it was presented to the common mind, it captivated the souls of men. The people who endured wave after wave of relentless and bloody persecution, directed against them with all the power of the Roman State, had something that they cared for more than for life itself. This preaching of the kingdom of heaven entered a field thickly planted with rich and powerful religions; and during a period that was wonderfully short, as historic periods go, it rooted them all out, to hold sole possession of the western world.

What was that kingdom of heaven which Christ proclaimed, and what was it then understood to be, that it should have achieved this astounding victory? Here I mean to set forth only one feature of it, which has been of late too much ignored or forgotten. It had a double aspect. It was both a kingdom of this world—a kingdom among men—and it was something altogether unworldly, belonging to another and invisible realm. It was a conception which had, as it were, these two faces, each of which complemented and modified the other, and in the great day of its spiritual power both these faces were clearly seen.

We look back to a time, not so very long ago, when Christianity had lost half this idea of the kingdom of heaven, almost altogether. It was thought of only as

something in the skies. The conception of a renewed and purified earth, yet to be, was practically given up; and the only thing worked for was final entrance into a far-off land of peace and rest, where there should be no more sin and no more death. After long and patient trial of this kind of Christianity, the world began to rebel against it. Men remembered that Jesus taught his followers to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." They began to perceive that a form of faith which stimulated no interest in such attempts as were made to produce a better world, here and now, and (if anything) threw the weight of its influence against great movements of education and reform, was of little help to mankind in its present struggles and necessities.

By degrees, therefore, earnest souls shifted the emphasis away from the idea of the kingdom of heaven as belonging to another world than this, and placed it on the conception of a new order of life to be established on the face of this planet where we now dwell. So far has this change of emphasis gone that a very large portion of our modern world has now given up thinking about that part of the kingdom of heaven which has its home in the invisible and unseen. Many people, no doubt, keep in the background of their mind some dim expectation of a life beyond this, which they will one day enter, though it makes no vital part of their present ambitions and desires. Many others deliberately thrust even that dim expectation from them. They expect no good, save what they can find in this present state of existence; and, therefore, they are all the more eager and impatient, they tell us, to realize their kingdom of heaven soon.

But whatever may be their case, in reason, for this view which they choose to take, at least they ought not

to plead the teaching of Christ for their precedent and example. This they are much disposed to do. Jesus, they say, had in mind a new state, or order, of human society, in which the law of love was to be supreme, so that wrong-doing should cease and equity should everywhere prevail. Yes, but his kingdom of God among men was all surrounded and overarched and interpenetrated by supernatural influences that made a vital part of it. You cannot take these away, and leave the material part of it anything like what it was in the early days of Christian faith.

The very soul is gone out of it, when it is no more than a conception of earthly peace and plenty and righteousness. No doubt there are very noble visions of what this earth might be under the rule of just laws and after its worst evils and vices had been exterminated; but, I think, such visions, confined to this earth alone, will all experience the fate of the great Messianic hope among the Jews. They will undergo, that is to say, a gradual coarsening and cheapening process, till they come to be at last nothing but a sordid dream of abundance of "corn and wine and oil." The Messianic hope, as it came from the great prophets, was truly a spiritual thing; but, as popularly held in Christ's day, it had become merely political and commercial. There was no fire of the spirit left in it.

In the hands of Christ, however, it awoke to new life and power. He not only put back into it its vanished soul, but equipped it with a might it never had before; and this he did because he walked in constant communion with an unseen world, because he not only felt the guidance of his Father in heaven, but saw, as it were, legions of angels attending him; and his new society on

earth was all bathed in the glory of that heavenly host which surrounded and watched over the children of men.

The slightest acquaintance with New Testament literature should convince us how these feelings and ideas which Jesus communicated to his followers went on into the apostolic age, and how impossible the triumph of Christianity would have been without them. Why do we dream that we can stoutly and triumphantly continue the Christian tradition, after we have given them up, living on the ethical impulse alone, and abandoning all thought of unseen spirits that come to help us on our way! To be sure, we have had ample warning of what results when dependence upon the unseen grows careless of moral distinctions, as no doubt it will manifest a constant tendency to do. But, if we have it not now, history is like to give our race abundant evidence that the ethical impulse is insufficient, deprived of the help afforded by a deep religious faith. The task is to keep fast hold of both the seen and the unseen, of both the material and the spiritual elements of existence, as life always does when it is at the top of its power and efficiency.

And why, in our religion, do we limit ourselves so much to cultivation of such contact with the unseen world as it is hardest to attain? Conscious communion with an eternal Spirit, brooding over us? Who of us can attain to that more than as a momentary and fitful gleam of light that sometimes breaks in upon us? Souls have lived, we are bound to believe, in intimate relations with that great encompassing Presence. Most of us, however, must be content to believe that he is not far from us, though, when we feel after him, we do not find him. It is much easier to make of one, like Christ, an ideal com-

panion and friend, to think of him not only as he once walked the hills of Galilee, but as a great king of the spiritual world, and to live with him, in the sense that we are sheltered and aided by an unseen spiritual might.

Easiest of all it should be, if we will not despise the first steps of faith, to live in the thought that our own beloved dead are still with us; that they can smooth many a hard place in our pathway; that their living influence is a factor in the events which befall us; that they, too, work for the world's redemption from sin and woe, and that, as they have gone to prepare a place for us, so by them we shall be received and cared for, when we go forth into the great unknown.

It does not seem to me that our feeling about God and Christ can be so very strong unless it is rooted in thoughts like these, unless, indeed, these majestic names become a kind of symbol for all the intimate and tender associations of our hearts that link us with an invisible world. Blessed are the humble and the poor, I have sometimes thought, for they can still think and speak of guardian angels about their bed! Even though the man of learning may fully persuade himself that there is no malign influence against which he needs these angels to guard him, how much of heaven departs from his life when they are no longer there!

And he can restore them if he will. His loved and lost may still visit him if he will have it so. In his heart he may even pray to them, depend upon them, walk with them through the scenes and trials of this earthly life. And this will be much more than an innocent pastime. It will be the steady cultivation of an awareness of that spiritual world in which we live and move and have our being. The highest and best philosophy

tells us, with assured conviction, that, whatever its content, this spiritual world exists. Religion is to feel its presence, to know by experience that it is round about us. And when our kingdom of heaven, begun on earth, thus reaches forward into that unseen realm, we are once more living in the same circle of ideas with Him whose great reward was promised to the poor in spirit.

HONESTY IN RELIGION.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men.—ROMANS xii. 17.

The chapter from which this saying is taken furnishes, at least to partial extent, what some have felt to be rather a lack in early Christian literature; that is to say, a kind of code of what might be called distinctive Christian duties. It has been said that Christianity was rather weak on this side; that it failed to state with sufficient particularity what Christians were expected to do. This criticism, however, seems to me to betray an inadequate understanding of what Christianity was in its origin. It came out of the life of a people who had long been governed by a most elaborate code of moral and religious duties, and it had seen that the results of such government were, in many respects, far from satisfactory. It therefore turned to a different method. Having lost confidence in descriptions and definitions of duty to produce the best kind of conduct, it gave its attention to the spirit in which all good deeds should be performed. It saw that if men had the right spirit they would not need to be so much guided by formal rules, and that if they had not the right spirit they would inevitably pervert the letter of the law to make it sanction unworthy purposes.

The fact that Christianity at first had no more moral code of its own, and borrowed so much then and ever

since from other sources, does not indicate any lack of regard for the moral life. It means that it proposed to reach that life by a better and surer path than formal rules could supply. But in this twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans we have a long and rather comprehensive collection of precepts designed to set forth the spirit in which the followers of Christ should regulate their lives; and I should say that, on the whole, it is code enough for any one to live by. It is one of the most remarkable utterances to be found in any literature. One could wish that it might be memorized as part of the education of young children, and that it might be inscribed on the walls of churches alongside the Decalogue; for whoever has in his heart the spirit that breathes through this collection of sayings is well equipped with a moral guide for all the situations in which he is likely to find himself.

That one of these sayings here singled out for particular notice suffers somewhat, perhaps, in being torn from its context. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" may sound in itself like a mere commonplace. As it stands in the Epistle, however, it shines with the light of that inward spirit, made up of trust in God, of loyalty to Christ, and devotion to a common good, that breathes through the whole passage from which it is taken. Honesty as thus set forth is not any commonplace virtue. It is one aspect of what has been, and still is, no doubt, most rare and wonderful in the world's life,—that spirit of goodness which is the very flower of our existence.

And in this sense, though it may sound a boastful and unwarranted claim, I am disposed to say that the world is growing honest. We have evidence here as in some other ways that Christianity is fulfilling its mission, and

that the spirit which Christ brought into the world to communicate to the minds of men is taking possession of their hearts. For, though this question of the growth or decline of Christianity is judged in a multitude of outward ways, these are not ways in which the author of our faith would be himself much interested. He set himself to live and to teach a certain kind of life, which was in his sight the proper life of a child of God, and we may be sure that out of all our debate about creeds and religious establishments the only thing that he would care for would be the question, to what extent the life of men as a whole was approaching that spiritual likeness.

Now one of the worst accusations that he had to make against the men of his own generation was embodied in the word "hypocrite." "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" One can imagine with what biting emphasis that phrase fell repeatedly from his lips. These people, he said, are not what they seem. They devour widows' houses, and for a pretence, to disguise their cruelty, they make long prayers. They are like whitened sepulchres,—fair without, and within full of dead men's bones. Against that kind of life Jesus used words of almost unmeasured scorn and reprobation and contempt. He seemed to be gentle and charitable toward every other kind of evil but this. Sins of weakness, even sins of open brutality, it would appear, he could forgive. But hypocrisy, the conscious masquerade in saintly garments to accomplish a nefarious end, he simply could not abide. It awakened in his heart a flaming indignation that could only utter itself in the speech of unsparing denunciation.

Some critics have thought that in this Jesus fell below himself and was false to his own method. If there was reason to suppose that in what he had to say about the

sin of hypocrisy he was uttering merely his personal irritation or dislike, certainly he fell below himself. If any kind of sympathetic treatment would suffice to cure that sin, then certainly he was false to his own method. But if he saw and judged that here was a moral ulcer which nothing but the surgeon's knife or the cautery of a burning wrath could reach, then his habitual kindness and gentleness had no place in the treatment of such a disorder. In that case his bitter words were the only instrument that he could appropriately use, and he was right to let the moral scorn that filled his heart have free speech.

For my part, not only am I disposed to trust his judgment in such a matter, but it seems to me that I can see for myself the justification of his course. Deliberate hypocrisy, I should say, is the one thing in human nature that is impervious to every kind of moral appeal—the one thing that will hear and heed nothing save the hot scorn by which at last it is shrivelled up. The charge which Christ brought against it was that it blocked the door to the kingdom of heaven. It would neither go in itself nor allow others to go in if it could help it. The road to a higher life is always open to every soul, no matter how low down it may be, if only it will be honest with itself. So long as it sees and realizes its condition of weakness or perversion, it is capable of overcoming, or being helped to overcome, the wrong and evil mingled with its life, and of making its way by slow steps to higher and safer ground. It can then always repent its sin, very likely does continually repent; and there is the possibility that at any moment this may become a repentance unto new life. But when a man will not acknowledge that he is in any respect a sinner, when he

is perfectly content with making it appear to others that he is a good man, and uses the false reputation he is able to secure to stifle and suppress the voice of his own conscience,—what hope is there for a soul like that? Its existence is a kind of living death. All genuine life within it must perish of mere suffocation; and it sets a false standard by whose speciousness many are likely to be led astray.

If we could see this matter as it is, I think we should feel all the horror that Jesus apparently felt for that suave and smooth rascality which wears an outward appearance of piety and honesty, but has no true spiritual life within. Even the charlatan or quack, who has no really bad intent, but gives all his time and thought to building up a repute for wisdom and skill that he does not possess, ought to seem to us a creature of such shadowy kind as to be worth not much more than our contempt. And there are times when the ordinary conventions of social life, the masks and shows which polite usage rather forces us to wear, get to seem to us hateful and intolerable. We seem too much like mere dummies or stuffed effigies of men and women, made to perform a mechanical part; and we long for some breath of genuine life to sweep these all away, that we may have done with disguises and live out what we truly are.

Yet there is a grave difficulty here; for all culture compels us frequently "to assume a virtue though we have it not." We only get to be the higher thing we hope to be by trying a part that is somewhat beyond our present capacity, and waiting for a slower spiritual growth to fill the place that is still vacant in our hearts. We school ourselves to an outward bearing of patience, for example, when inwardly we are anything but submissive

and calm. But that is the way to learn quietude of mind, and finally, as the result of such discipline, the patience comes.

When we see the most genuine of human life, that of children, indulging in a great deal of play-acting, instinctively assuming many imaginary parts, we are bound to think that this is a necessary incident of our unfolding life. In a certain sense, all the world is a stage "and all the men and women are players," though not "merely players." That qualifying word is just the touch that melancholy gives. We need not think so meanly of ourselves because we play a part, for this romantic interest of trying to appear what we should wish to be is what supports us in stretching our life forward to the higher pattern set before us.

But there is doubtless a certain peril in all habitual pretence, though it may be entirely innocent of bad intent. Culture itself may anywhere, and frequently does, harden into a mere form of living; and then it is worse than a useless thing. At whatever hazard and whatever cost, our life, to be worth anything, must keep its note of genuineness and sincerity. When that is lost then all is lost. Vice is never so very dangerous wearing its own colors. It is the politely varnished vice whose ugliness we do not see that is our most threatening foe.

Bad as it was in the old days in England when highwaymen infested the land, and the peaceful traveller was liable in any unfrequented road to be waylaid by them, our modern life, we have been made to see, contains holes and corners where this same highwayman may hide himself and do his work so that we cannot tell by whom we have been robbed. Quite naturally our modern world has fallen into a good deal of panic about this, perceiv-

ing itself to be in the presence of a much graver peril than that of ancient days. So of all ways in which hypocrisy creeps in upon us. We can navigate the channels where we must go well enough so long as outward appearances will show us its rocks and shoals, and the marks placed there to guide our course are not juggled with. But when the buoys have drifted, or have been removed all out of place, and when the very surface of the river itself begins to lie to us as to where deep water may be found, then we are in the midst of bewildering and perhaps fatal difficulties.

Now it may be a strong and wide reaction against the feeling that our modern life has greatly increased the opportunities for successful hypocrisy, or it may be this feeling coupled with the great passion for truth and reality which scientific interests and pursuits have engendered; certainly I think that in these later years our world has grown more honest. A great deal that is rather rude and crude and coarse in our life of the present day may be not unreasonably interpreted as being, in part at least, the result of this change. Much that is rather shocking in our drama and our literature betokens not so much an increase of beastliness as a new desire to get rid of make-believe and pretence.

The lower passions of humanity themselves seem not untouched by this new feeling for sincerity. It is as if they were saying: "We may not be very lovely, but anyhow we scorn to appear other than we are. We will walk abroad as the Lord made us and will no longer pretend to be something we are not." A great many writers are ruthlessly tearing aside one or another decorous veil, as who should say: "These festering sores of the world's life have been hidden long enough. Strip them bare and let

us see what kind of malady we must undertake to grapple with. Mind-cure—simply going on as if there were nothing preying at our vitals—will not work. We must see and measure the disorder that we have to cure, and no longer build our peace of mind upon pretence that it is not there."

I must say that a considerable part of this attempt to drag into the light of publicity the darker side of human existence appears to me ill-judged as a matter of practical benefit, and that what has come to be called "muck-raking" is often no more than a deliberate attempt to exploit some possible sensation. And yet I cannot doubt that in the general mind of our time there is a new desire to know the truth of things, a new feeling of the futility of maintaining any sort of sham, a new disposition at whatever risks to provide things that are honest in the common sight. It would be rather strange if the dominance of science in our age did not help to produce that result. The first lesson learned by those who are trained in our schools of science is that of supreme reverence for the truth of things, so far as that truth can be ascertained, and of high regard for every crumb of truth that can be gathered up, no matter how insignificant it may appear to be; for no one can tell what importance it may have when fitted to its place in the scheme of knowledge as a whole. From this source, then, as well as from the slow development of the world's moral sense, we are entitled to look for growing appreciation of the worth of a sincere and honest life.

But there are two realms of thought which it is particularly hard for this new spirit to subdue to its own uses, and which are therefore likely to lag behind the general advance. One is the realm of politics, where dependence

has been placed so long upon the promotion of one or another popular craze that its management by strictly truthful considerations can only be established with great difficulty. This, however, is here no part of our concern. But the world's religion is equally hard to convert to the idea that there can be no possible advantage in trying to make half-truths serve as actual realities. Religion is a very ancient branch of human culture, and its forms of thought always tend to harden into dogmas, which, because of their rigidity, become the soul's prison rather than its dwelling-place. The very familiarity of our language of faith prevents us often from seeing its true meaning. One of the signs of the times is that so many people brought up in the Christian faith get hold of the same ideas as they are uttered by some Indian or Persian prophet and think they have made a new discovery. They have never realized what sublime truths were embodied in Christian teachings. I suppose none of us is likely to have an adequate sense of the far-reaching character of the fundamental ideas of the gospel save as we go back to see what they meant when they were first proclaimed among men, because we are so accustomed to the sound of the words in which these ideas are embodied that they seldom make any new appeal to our hearts.

Then, too, religion speaks very largely, as it is obliged to speak, the language of symbolism, since the realities with which it deals are too large for exact description. And any symbol can be given such a wide variety of meanings that, unless we are somewhat careful in their use, they easily take on a false significance which is soon invested with a sacred character. Above all, perhaps, religion holds in keeping what the heart of the world knows to be its most priceless possession; and men are

naturally timid and anxious about the forms in which this precious inheritance is held. It is always difficult to convince them that, though some falsehood may be mingled with these forms, it is not better to tolerate its presence rather than risk through change the loss of what the form contains.

For these reasons religion is always slow to answer this exhortation, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." That passion for veracity which has become rather a marked feature of the life of the present day will perhaps make itself strongly felt in the church last of all. I am not making any such ridiculous charge as that Christian churches generally are honeycombed with hypocrisy, or insincerity. On the contrary, I am sure that there is very little of conscious imposture anywhere in the church, and I realize that a certain portion of what proclaims itself as superior honesty in religion is nothing but extreme shallowness of thought. But I do think that the church has not yet caught as it should that passion for veracity which is one of the dominant notes of the life of our time. It is not sufficiently animated by a disposition to look the facts of existence in the face, whatever they may be, and to seek knowledge rather than indulge itself in pleasing fancies. The world itself may not be so decorous or so polished or so filled with courtly grace as it once was; but it is a world which has made its way much closer to the truth of things than earlier times have been.

And what we now want is a religion less interested in comfortable views and imposing ceremonies than in getting hold of the deep realities of the soul's life; a church in which people do not say this or profess that which they can reconcile it with their consciences to say and profess, but where certain truths of the spirit are held and pro-

claimed because minds which hold them cannot help believing them.

After all, that cannot be a perfectly sincere and genuine spiritual life which is afraid that its faith may be overthrown if it reads a certain book, or listens to certain teachers who have new discoveries to set before it. We are sometimes told that no one can measure the depth of assurance in minds that are trained in the discipline of our most ancient church. But I rather think that may not be so profound a sea of certitude after all.

Are people so sure of their mental possessions when they dare not remove their eyes from them to look in another direction, lest when they look back again they may find their cherished treasure gone? It is the impression which so much of the church gives of holding its faith by steadfast refusal to see anything else, and of being willing, when argument fails, to meet its opponents by using opprobrious names; it is this which has so much weakened the influence of the church in our day. Religion, to have much power in the world, must not only satisfy itself that it is honest, but must provide things that are honest in the sight of all men. There must be no doubt of its sincerity before it can really touch the common heart.

You and I may not have so much faith, in bulk, as compared with what others profess to believe; but at least let it be of that kind which protects and shelters us, not that which we have to guard carefully from the world's contamination. Even a little faith of which we can know that nothing will destroy or disturb it, is better than the most imposing ritual and creed about which there is still something contingent and uncertain.

We may be sure that, down underneath the superficial things about which men so much disagree, religion has

a solid basis, whose permanence is beyond dispute. Let us find that, and we have an entrance to the heart of all sects and schools, a resting-place for the spirit which is never endangered by the shifting winds of opinion, a fortress for the soul which makes the partisan pride of ecclesiastics in their pet institutions seem ridiculous.

And because religion, when all is said and done, remains mankind's chief interest, let us do what we can to make it what it must be to lead the world's advance. We have no commission to supply it with a set of satisfactory beliefs we have a commission to persuade it not to content itself with anything less than beliefs that will bear the strain of every criticism put upon them; not to pin its faith to traditions which history cannot approve, or speculations which need an ingenious logic for their support, but, letting these all go, to lay hold upon those eternal verities which Christ proclaimed, some portion of which every great prophet has spoken since the world of men came into being.

There can be no sectarianism or sectarian warfare where men are dealing with the really big issues of human existence, for then they see that honest souls everywhere are beholding the same truths though in different dress. We want a church which continually puts these big things and not little things to the front. Then rancor must cease, timidity will be gone, and, as we move forward into the kingdom of heaven which Christ preached, there will be no more doubts as to the everlasting reality of the spiritual life.

STATE AND CHURCH.

The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.—GAL.
iii. 24.

Here, as elsewhere in the writings of St. Paul, we can point out a quite narrow and technical meaning and, if we choose, stop there in our interpretation. The great Apostle was well trained in the use of rabbinical logic, and he had a certain contest to wage against Orthodox Judaism which now possesses little save historic interest. He was constantly seeking to prove to up-holders of the ceremonial law that, according to its own terms, it was to be abrogated with the appearance of the Messiah. Christ having come, the law was no longer to be obeyed. At all events, it was no longer required that men should obey it in order to assure their salvation.

Paul never offended his former friends and companions by speaking hard words of customs and practices which he had himself outgrown. In this respect he is a model which many converts from an older faith might study to their profit. We have some reason to beware of men who turn back to revile the religion in which they have been reared. Jews who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah no doubt had many hard words to say about Paul; but he was always respectful and appreciative in his treatment of what was sacred in their eyes. The law of Moses, he insisted over and over, was really a divine utterance. It did embody the will of God; only there had now been a larger utterance of the divine purpose and

a better divine guide had come. The full disclosure of God's will having been made, the partial revelations of former days had no further use. When therefore the author of the epistle to the Galatians spoke of "the law," he did not mean law in general, or in the abstract; he meant specifically that code of religious requirements which had been developed by the Hebrew people.

And yet Paul was no "dry-as-dust" theologian. He was essentially a great poet, a man of vision and insight. He bore his part in the controversies of the time and fought his battle of the spirit with such weapons as his training had furnished him. But it is a mistake to think that he saw nothing save these smaller issues of the hour. Some of his sayings sound as modern as if they had been first spoken only yesterday. He had flashes of insight by which vast reaches of the world of thought were opened up to him, and he seemed to anticipate the path of human progress in some ways as far at least as we ourselves have come.

I think we have a right to feel that the largest interpretation which his words will bear puts us more into sympathy with his inmost mind than will the strict limitation of them to circumstances of the time and place amid which they were spoken. For example, as he contrasted the ancient law of his people with what had been reported to him of the teaching of Christ, I should imagine that he himself deeply felt the negative influence of the earlier command, as compared with the positive tone of the later teaching. The great word of the law was, "thou shalt not"; it was mainly a repressive influence, a negation of the more wild and lawless tendencies of human nature. The great word of Christ, on the other hand, as he summed up the requirements of

God, was, "thou shalt!" Where the old faith was forever saying to men, "this and this you must not do," the new faith was demanding of them, "this and this you must perform."

I say that St. Paul seems to feel, and recognize, this more deep and vital contrast between the religion in which he had been brought up and that into which he had been led through Christ. It was not only that through signs and wonders he had come to believe that Jesus was divinely appointed to be his own and the world's guide; he saw in the whole content of the message which Christ had brought a more full disclosure of life's divine meaning and end. He saw that in the very nature of things the law, "as given through Moses," was provisional and incomplete; that it was only the preparation for something yet to come, not a finished structure or programme; and that to which it seemed everywhere pointing forward he found in Christ. This is the significance of many of his sayings: "When I was a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." And that is the point of view from which to read this other saying: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." I know no way by which this can be made more clear than to point to the repressive and negative aspect of the earlier, as compared with the later dispensation. That was to very large extent a drill and discipline in what must be avoided and left undone. It was an attempt to inhibit certain lines of human conduct.

Take, for example, the Decalogue itself,—the foundation of the whole system of Jewish legislation. Here are ten commandments, eight of which are distinct prohibi-

tions, while only two are stated in positive terms. The neophyte coming forward to learn of the way of righteousness is there told of eight things that he must not do, and of only two that he must perform. "Honor thy father and thy mother," and "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," are the only defined duties of positive character given him to observe. And of these the latter is positive only in form; for if the inquiring mind asked "How may I keep holy the Sabbath day?" he was told only "Thou shalt not do any work." That was merely a blocking up of certain paths in which human nature might incline to walk, not the opening of any new way for it to go forth and serve the Lord.

Even the first and great commandment which, on the lips of Christ, was put into positive terms, in the original Decalogue was made purely negative: Thou shalt have no other gods before me, and shall make no graven images before which to worship. Really in the whole series of sacred commands, justly honored and reverenced for many centuries as they have been, there was but one attempt to set forth the positive duties of the moral and religious life: "Honor thy father and thy mother!" All the rest were concerned merely with what must be forbidden and shut off. And that same weight of emphasis on the negative side runs all through the development of the Jewish law. When it did attempt to say what men should do, its motive was more destructive than constructive. That is to say, it was mainly occupied with the task of uprooting from the soil of the world's life certain things growing there that were thought of as being noxious and bad. When it came to the question what should be planted in place of these prohibited weeds, the law had not much to say. When the mind

which had observed all these negations and prohibitions wanted to know, like that young ruler that came to Jesus, what it should do to inherit eternal life, the law had little counsel to give.

In the words of the great Hebrew prophets, it is true, we hear a far different tone; but they are not now in question, and they often spoke very disrespectfully of the ceremonial requirements which the priests and rabbis enforced. In so far as Jewish character was shaped by the influence of the law, the best it could produce was but a negative type of righteousness; a morality which refrained from doing certain things, but was in no wise conspicuous for the good it was able to accomplish. As Christ said, it made a great virtue of sacrificing a tenth of its mint, anise, and cummin, but neglected the weightier matters of the law.

Now it would be quite wrong to think of this negative aspect of our higher life as if it were a matter of no consequence. In its degree it is as much a vital part of our moral and spiritual culture as anything else. But one can see that if men get no further than this that is not going very far. One could not be much of a painter or musician if he merely knew what not to do. No more can there be any high art of living when all the directions men have for it consist in a code of prohibitions. This undoubtedly is what led Jesus to say to his disciples, "Unless your righteousness shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." The better life, if it is to amount to anything, must be an affair of doing, not merely of not doing. It has growths of its own to nurture and rear, not merely alien growths to root out and destroy. It has a temple of its own to build in the human heart, not

merely a house of idols to demolish and obliterate. Such was the meaning of the mission of Christ in the thought of St. Paul. What had gone before him was a clearing of the ground, a preparation for some work of upbuilding yet to come. In Jesus Paul saw disclosed the spiritual humanity which God meant to establish when other and grosser types of character had been in part destroyed. "The law," he said, "was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."

There are always these two poles of our moral endeavor. We have to be continually saying to ourselves, to our children, to each other, to the world in general, "Thou shalt not!" There are certain things which you may be prompted to do, and which, at whatever seeming cost, you must avoid. That is undoubtedly the first lesson which mankind has to learn, and it cannot get far until that lesson has been learned. Nothing good or great is possible, to the individual or the nation, till a certain amount of self-denial has been acquired and is practised. At the same time, it is to little purpose that human nature is schooled in any such discipline of negation unless the positive side of the higher life is set before its sight. The only ultimate reason for not doing the proscribed thing is that there is something else, vastly better worth the doing; and until the mind sees that something else, which Paul found in Christ, its drill of self-repression is a mere nagging and tyrannical discipline without meaning and without profit.

Now we have received from the past two great institutions, the Church and the State, which correspond to these two poles of our moral life; and your thought has been led thus far in order to consider the thesis that these two institutions, which are thus stated to be

complementary to each other, ought each one to be devoted mainly to its appropriate task, leaving the other to fulfil the other half of what needs to be done to secure moral and spiritual progress. The State is really our great institution for saying "Thou shalt not." And for reasons to be presently stated it is better that the State should, for the most part, confine itself to that negative side of life's moral purpose and endeavor. The Church is much better equipped to speak and enforce the positive command "Thou shalt," and there are again reasons why the Church would do well to keep to its proper function, leaving the work of politics and the police severely alone.

A combination of causes in recent years has led to a wide-spread popular feeling that it is about time to drop the Church mostly out of consideration, as an instrument of the world's moral advance, and to concentrate attention upon the State as the more promising agency for securing a better world in days to come. This feeling is perhaps largely due to the fact that it now seems a gigantic task to adapt the Church to purposes which the modern man holds to be of greatest importance, and that the State appears to be more ready to his hand. Also, it is to be said, that the mission of the Church having long been conceived in terms of "other-worldliness," the average man now seems entirely at a loss to understand what the Church is good for, so far as this world's work is concerned. But I must think that this attempt to secure what we desire solely through the State, this notion of a democratic government become so religious in itself that it needs no separate religious institutions to support its higher life, will ultimately break down altogether. Sooner or later men are sure to discover that they cannot get what they want by political agencies,

and they will have to turn back to the Church and try to fit that for better service of the world's needs.

My reason for so thinking is that the natural function of written law, and almost the whole of its function, seems to me to be to repress and restrain what is found unfortunate and bad. The State can define and put down certain courses of conduct which it is in every way desirable to suppress. But when the State attempts to set up in place of what is bad that which is positively good, it is face to face with the difficulty that no great ideal ever yet was written into a formal command. That simply cannot be done. It is the business of poetry and the imagination to describe the higher spiritual attributes and qualities of our life which we desire to attain, and such things cannot be described in a legal enactment. You might as well try to translate the twenty-third psalm into the language of a conveyancer's title deed as think to make the law of the land enforce those finer virtues which are the only true glory of our human life. Our only recourse if we are to make the State our main dependence is to trust that, where law has cleared the way, the nobler types of individual and civic righteousness will spring spontaneously out of human nature, without the maintenance of any common line of spiritual culture and endeavor; and that I should say is about as completely a speculative faith as any that men can cherish.

This exaggerated idea of what can be done for the world's improvement through the State has already loaded our statute books with a multitude of laws which remain mostly a dead letter, because there is no possibility of their right enforcement; and this tends to produce a feeling of utter contempt for the whole law-making power in the minds of large classes of our popula-

tion. When we remember how quickly household discipline breaks down entirely if it shall consist in threats that are never made good; how quickly the child which has learned that it can evade its parents' commands gets the habit of placing them wholly at defiance, the wonder is not that there is so much lawlessness abroad in this land of ours, but that so much of the law-abiding instinct still remains. For, with us, government has become very much like a scolding mother who forever threatens and forever seems impotent to enforce her will. Far better would it be if we confined the State more rigidly to its negative task of subduing what is, in the sight of all enlightened people, anti-social and wrong, and gave up the dream of making it beyond that a positive instrument for securing virtue and prosperity to every common man. Government can say with right and authority "Thou shalt not." When we undertake to make it say "Thou shalt," we place it in difficulties which it does not easily surmount.

The law may be our schoolmaster to bring us where we can see and recognize the great ideals that shall lead us on. But the law cannot supply that ideal element which is our only efficient guide. It knows not how to command the higher duties that life requires of us, if we are to have any really noble art of living. Its skill does not suffice to point out the path of the spirit through the intricate maze of circumstances where that path must go. No rule could ever define what it is to live a great human life, any more than it could tell how to paint a great picture. The rule can say with much distinctness what are the faults and weaknesses to be avoided, but when it comes to setting out on the road to positive achievement it is only a very little way on

that road that any rule can go. Blindness to this fact seems to me to account for the fallacy that civilization has now come far enough to drop the Church and accomplish what it desires through the State. The whole ideal side of life has to be taken for granted and left to itself if we are to follow that scheme, and I do not think that sound knowledge of human nature will sanction such a proceeding.

But, if it is better that political authority should confine itself mostly to enforcing upon the world its command of "Thou shalt not," leaving the needful "Thou shalt" to be shaped by some quite other side of the world's life, equally it is desirable that the Church should meddle as little as may be with the business of the State. The temporal rule of the Church is in every way a false and pernicious dream. It has made endless mischief in the development of the Christian consciousness, and has accomplished no result that can serve as justification or pretext for its future exercise. Religion, by the very law of its being, has to concern itself with the ideal life; and the further it rises out of its low beginnings into some height of spiritual insight and excellence, the more completely its attention is absorbed by the beauty of the ideal which has engaged its attention. Now that kind of absorption with things to be seen only with the eye of faith is not the best training for men who have to deal with practical situations. It is too much like setting an eye trained to the far keen sight of the Indian to deal with a microscopic task.

It might almost be said that the minister of religion, in proportion as he prepares himself for proper exercise of his special calling, thereby disqualifies himself for the direction of enterprises of political character; and

it is a most unhappy circumstance that so many of them appear to be persuaded of their peculiar fitness to do that very thing. They are not apt to be wise counsellors in that field, and their presence there betrays too much their failure to appreciate what is given them to do in their own place. I do not mean to say that the ideal and the practical must stand utterly divorced from each other in any given mind. We were in most unhappy case if that were true. I do say that life's training is likely to produce superior proficiency in one direction or the other; and it is best everywhere to have superior proficiency in command. I do not like the modern tendencies which so much make the minister a man of affairs; for I more than suspect that, as he becomes more the administrator, he will become less and less the prophet.

The main business of the Church is with those ideals in which the positive authority of our existence is almost altogether vested. It must be self-evident, when you come to think of it, that the law, when it tries to be positive, is almost absolutely helpless except as an ideal helps it out. Take that one positive command of the Decalogue! What is it to honor one's father and mother? The law can say, "do that"; but no one knows what that is save as he carries in his mind some imaginary picture of the dutiful child. When one said to Jesus, in effect, "That is a great law to love thy neighbor, but what does it mean; who is my neighbor?" the Master made no attempt to elaborate the rule, but told him instead an imaginary story to show what it meant.

One can see ideally and with the eye of faith how such precepts will work out in practice, but it is not possible

to make the precept itself a guide-book of the higher life. And when we consider, what is also a most patent fact, that no deficiency of human nature in general is more glaring than its lack of imagination, how can we trust the future to such spontaneous outcropping of the ideal faculty as there may be in the common mind? Where is there greater need of a steady line of tradition and culture than in that realm where ideals are formed to which the common heart must look with instinctive reverence and adoration?

Whatever may be true of other religions, and however they may serve, strongly or feebly, man's ideal nature, Christianity has been amply and superbly equipped to perform this very office for all that live. It has a life to hold up to the sight of men, which makes, in itself, a most complete and magnificent ideal; and which has never failed to captivate the attention of those who have become familiar with its features. It is a life before which the greatest minds have always bowed most humbly in token of heartfelt submission to its wondrous grace and charm. Nowhere else is a divine law and pattern so written for all to read as in the story of that strong and stainless life. Nowhere else in the record of the past is such grouping and balance of all the qualities which go to the making of a perfect human soul. To a world full of dumb longing for some more perfect form of being, it knows not what, a world very little able to shape out of its own fancy a type and image of what it desires to be, this picture of a life which fulfils our utmost thought of what our life might be is offered, as a mark for spiritual endeavor and a living embodiment of spiritual law.

It is an inestimable boon. Would that the Church

itself might better learn the intrinsic value of it; that, giving up its pursuit of lesser aims, it might devote itself to the one supreme task of shaping the world's ill-formed idealism into the likeness of that matchless heart and mind. So, I think, might it provide for men a positive law of the good life as it can be given in no other way. These things lie far beyond our science and our analytic skill. They cannot be written in any moral treatise or expressed in any moral code. They belong among the unutterable and indescribable visions of the spirit. Life builds them for us, yet no man could ever tell how they were built or by what hidden art they were created. We only know that, while it looks upon them, all lesser life may feel its way in their direction; indeed that where they appear, in living form, they draw us by a certain commanding might, so that, according to our strength, we cannot choose but rise and follow them.

No part of our every-day experience is more common, more luminous, or more persistently ignored in much of our theorizing, than this same commanding force of what we call personality. Everywhere there are men and women who do with curious ease what no one else dare attempt, by way of marshalling other men and women along some common path. All our titles and high-sounding dignities are useless; the weight of empire, the power of machinery, the force of persecution, are all as nothing when the man appears who can lay the hearts of multitudes in pawn. What does this mean if not that the higher law of our being is written in terms of personality as in no other way; that we see there the moral imperative that is over us, as in no other place? And if this be the lesson that is taught us all along our way, what light is thus thrown upon the historic fact

that the vast stream of Christian faith comes to us out of the past, bearing aloft the image of its crucified Lord, and proposing by means of that single personality, as by a magic talisman, to move and sway the world!

For after all that is precisely the magic that does work. We shall do well to realize that the Christian method of inviting mankind to see in Christ the way of its redemption is deeply founded in the nature of things; as also that what is so potent in his influence stands for the most priceless thing that we can gather and create as the result of our own poor labors. Personality, we say, or, to take another word, we may call it character; that mysterious blend and weave of the many diverse threads of human being into a pattern which, at its best, simply captures all beholders by its more than earthly beauty! Too much, I fear, we are apt to let a great instance of this be our despair rather than our inspiration and our hope. We say to ourselves that never can we dream of radiating from our stupid, blundering, and graceless persons such an ineffable charm.

True it is that by no skill of construction can we be taught how to put together out of our ill-balanced, fragmentary natures anything like such a perfect whole. Yet if we live humbly, simply, and sincerely with such a pattern before our eyes we may grow into some distant likeness of it; and to come to rule, even in one other heart, as Christ rules over the world of men is enough joy and satisfaction to be the height of one's ambition. To be the least in such a kingdom of heaven as that indicates is more than to be greatest in any lower realm. It is well pointed out by a critic of one of our statements of faith that the expression, "salvation by character," might better read "salvation is character"; that and

nothing else. We can never be in heaven till we ourselves are heavenly; and the road that shall lead us to that blessedness is best shown us in the most heavenly life that offers itself for our guidance and our help.

THE HIGHER INDIVIDUALISM.

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.—MATT. xvi. 25.

When one is journeying by rail, now and again he is aware of a milestone beside the way flitting past his window. As a matter of curiosity he watches perhaps for the next one, to read the number which tells how many miles he has come, or how many he has yet to go. But this is an affair of rather languid interest, to which he is not apt to pay much attention, if he has a good book or is in pleasant conversation with a companion or there is a fine landscape over which his eye can roam.

Scarcely more than this do those other milestones, the years, mean to us on our journey of life, if we have any sense that it is a real journey on a great highway toward a definite end. If our progress were only like that of the poor wretch, in old days, on his way to the scaffold, we might watch these signs with much anxiety, and no distractions of the moment would be likely to remove our attention from them. But life is not, or ought not to be, like that. There is a great established road that humanity is travelling. "A highway shall be there," said one of the Hebrew Prophets; and assuredly it is there; we are passing over it. It is a journey somewhere, not merely movement that ends in catastrophe.

Let us, for a few moments, consider three successive stages in the life of our race which, if we have them clearly in mind, should deepen our impression that there is a definite way of progress along which human feet are bound; and that it is a path worth treading, not merely

for the pleasures it affords as we travel on, but for the sake of the end to be reached. And first, I will ask you to notice that in what we account ancient days nobody thought of the individual person as having any special worth, in and of himself. People existed in and through and for the State. That was the great permanent reality of human life, which stood fast from age to age, while individuals came and went. The State was like our own physical body, and people, or different classes of people, were only as the atoms or organs of which the body is composed. In themselves, human beings were thought of as practically without value. It was only as they entered into the life of the corporate body or performed for it some useful service, that their individual lives took on the least significance. They were nothing but the perpetually renewed links in a great chain, and were absolutely useless, fit only for the rubbish heap when they were broken or became too weak to bear the strain put upon the strong cable of which they made a part.

One can see how cheap human life would be rated when such views prevailed. So long as there were individuals enough to serve the purposes of the State, a single man was of no consequence whatever. And men were plentiful in those old days. What matter if many of them were killed in battle, or despoiled by robbers, or worked to death in such a project as the building of the Pyramids! There were always more to take the place of those who were ground up in the huge social machine, and to be thus used was almost the sole purpose of their existence.

This view made it difficult for the thought of the immortality of the soul to gain much strength in the common

mind. For if the ordinary man fulfilled the whole purpose of his being through his service of the State, why should there be any hereafter for him? Having done what he was created to do, why should his existence be any further prolonged? The uncommon man might lay hold of that hope for himself and his loved ones. Yet, though he could pretend that he was not made of common clay, a sense of the worthlessness of humanity at large, from which he could not wholly disentangle himself, must have weighed heavily upon his own expectation.

This view made every man virtually a slave of the State. He had no rights which the State was bound to respect. He had no assured title to liberty, even in his mind and spirit. His thoughts as well as his acts must be subject to State control, and his religion must be that which the State put upon him, not anything growing out of his own heart. I do not say that life, ever, anywhere, was altogether shaped after this pattern, because human nature is always stronger than the theories which human intellects attempt to apply to it. But this was the theory in old days, and in so far as they could men made their world in the likeness of that theory.

The great weakness of the society which grew up in this way was that it furnished but little stimulus for the production of a strong manhood and womanhood in the great mass of the people. The few that were at the top of the social pile had an interesting game to play; but, beneath them, humanity was kept little above the condition of cattle. The common man was not taught to regard his life as a thing of consequence. He was a mere pawn on the chess-board of the world's life, to be moved about and sacrificed as others might decree; and he had small incentive to try to be anything else. Whatever

fair and imposing social structure might be built out of such material, it was like those first Babylonian castles and palaces that were made of sun-dried brick. The units of which such buildings were composed were friable and soft. Nothing very enduring could be constructed out of that sort of material; and in fact all the great political fabrics of those days did crumble about as fast as they could be put together.

But the foundation for a quite different world, and one in many ways exactly opposite in character, was laid in the teaching of Christ. There, for the first time, we find the individual man made the supreme object of God's care, and the embodiment of supreme values in finite existence. Jesus left the State, and every kind of political organization, entirely one side. They did not have anything to do with his purpose, or figure in the least in his thought. The State was nothing to him, as the Temple at Jerusalem was nothing. The stones of that sacred edifice, he taught, were to be utterly torn apart and he had no plan for its rebuilding. The only time he ever referred to the Roman Governor of the land was to call him a "fox." He saw just two great realities, God and the human soul; and all that stood between these two were, in his regard, little better than pompous non-entities. We need not suppose that he cherished antagonism or animosity toward government, as does for example the anarchist of our time. But he lived and moved in a wholly different range of ideas where government had little significance. Its operations were all on some lower level of existence with which he did not much concern himself.

What he saw, towering above everything else, was the mind and soul of the individual man. There was to be

joy in heaven over one repentant sinner. The very least in his kingdom of heaven was to be greater than the greatest who had nothing but worldly station to boast. His Gospel, for a long time, appealed mainly to the humble and lowly, and the reason is not far to seek! For these people, who had been trodden under foot as if they were nothing but dirt, and who had known little reason to think of themselves as being better than that, straight-way found themselves raised by his teaching to a spiritual estate where they could look down on the riches of kings and princes with indifference.

This teaching did not at once bear its full fruit in the world's life, for presently Christianity was itself captured by the State, and dressed up in imperial garments; when the individual sank back again much to his old level of utter subjection and comparative worthlessness. But the leaven of Christ's thought was not entirely destroyed, and with the Protestant Reformation it began once more to be strongly felt. With that movement we can see the real inauguration of a second stage in human development, which quite reversed the ancient way of looking at life. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath"; and the motto which might serve as a kind of epitome of the genius of our whole modern civilization would be "the State was made for man, not man for the State."

The great institutions of the world exist, not that they may thrive by sacrificing individuals to their welfare, but to serve the needs of the common man everywhere. It is his happiness and welfare and development that is always the first consideration; and institutions are not to be for a moment tolerated save as they contribute to the well-being of even the least and poorest of human-

kind. It is they who must be subservient to the requirements of our common humanity, not we who must yield ourselves to their arrogant demands.

The whole later period of the world's life has been a time of gradual but increasing individual emancipation; a time of permitting each human being to make the most that was possible out of his or her own life; even of great and widespread concerted endeavor to reach down to low places, where the individual is not minded to try to do much with the talents intrusted to his keeping, in order to induce him to lift himself out of the dust and mire with which he is too much content.

All this has been designed to improve the average quality of human life, and there can be no doubt whatever but that it has improved enormously. What we call the common or average man has become a far different being, and that is the true glory of our modern civilization. The main emphasis of this later period has been placed, not upon the erection of social structures, but upon the development of a better manhood and womanhood in the great mass of mankind; as when the builders of old Babylon gave over thinking, for the time being, how they should rear larger and statelier and more convenient temples, and devoted themselves to the task of finding, or providing, something better to make them out of than sun-dried brick.

This, one cannot help remarking, indicates the great mistake which the speculative German intellect has been making in recent years. It appears to have concluded that the emphasis of civilizing forces must be placed upon the building of a complete social structure; though it must be said that the Germans are not sufficiently alone in this to be held altogether responsible for what has

occurred. It seems a better judgment to say that on the whole the main effort and emphasis of this later period has been to develop a wiser and stronger and abler kind of individual man. Let us have freedom enough to stimulate to the utmost the growth of individual character, no matter if, temporarily at least, our organizations partly break down. The first of all considerations is to produce men. That is the great idea of the modern world. We can better afford a relatively poor social or political machine, than a relatively inefficient kind of average man. The divine purpose does not care very much what sort of government we have, save as that has to do with the quality of our manhood; and too much government may be as bad as too little government, if we remember that the final test to be applied is the kind of individual produced by social conditions.

The first great stage of human life, then, is that which regards the individual merely as existing for the State. The second stage of human life is that in which the State is looked upon as existing for the individual. But is this all? We have now gone far enough in this second period to realize that it is not the end. Individualism has been the Gospel of our age, but we have been getting too much a type of individualism which is far from bringing us to our promised and longed-for kingdom of heaven. No matter how strong and able a man may be, we discover that he is more or less a nuisance, to himself and to everybody else, when he attempts to live out his life in selfish disregard of other people by whom he is surrounded. That higher type of personality, which we want, must be one which voluntarily humbles itself to assume those common tasks and burdens, which the lower type of man bears only as a slave. Human life can only enter upon its

complete and final stage when the emancipated individual, of his own volition, finds his highest good and his highest joy in that work of service which was at first bound upon him against his will.

The great forces of the world have destroyed, for us, most of those tyrannies under which millions have been ground in the past. The chains, both of religious and civil despotism, have been so far broken that each one can have a very large measure of freedom, if he will. And, in the exercise of that liberty, men have everywhere sprung into such new life as was never enjoyed upon earth before. Yet that whole process has been in vain, we begin to see, unless free men, of their own motive, combine for a common good, and each one joyfully surrenders something of his own advantage to support the common cause. This, because there can be no such thing as society on any other terms, and because the emancipated individual himself grows into nothing but a monstrosity, except as he grows into right social relations with others of his kind.

After all, our common life is the great thing to consider, as men thought in ancient days; only it is to be considered by all together and not merely by a few for the many. The spiritual man, in the very nature of his being, is a social man. He simply spoils his own humanity when he tries to be anything else. When he finds his life, the only thing he can do with it that makes it profitable, whether to himself or to the world at large, is to devote it to the furtherance of social ends. The Lord of life commits a portion of his treasure separately to each one of his servants; but then those servants must commit it back again to the great common currents of the world's life or they will themselves ultimately get no reward. This I think

is the meaning of Christ's saying that he who would save his life must lose it. The true man must cease to think of himself; he must think only of the work given him to do. And then he finds himself, in that work, the new and higher man that he had hoped to be. Perhaps no misery is known to human beings greater than that of not being able to forget oneself. That is the very burden and sorrow of chronic invalidism. There are many weaknesses of the body which we cannot overcome. But that weakness of the spirit we ought to be able to outgrow; and escape from it is like escaping out of prison into liberty. The selfish man is a threat and terror to others, but he is also and not less a curse to himself; and the only path to happiness he can ever find is that which leads him where he can sink his own private and particular interests in what makes for the well-being of his kind.

Now this, I believe, is the next great lesson that humanity is set to learn, and I am sure it is a lesson which in time it will learn. Great minds have seen it as the goal to be reached. Great hearts have lived it, and found in it the promised joy and peace. By slow degrees the whole of mankind must approach this consummation toward which the endeavor of the ages has strained. First, a stage in which the common life is everything, and the separate life is nothing. Next, a stage in which the separate life asserts its own supreme right to the gratification of its wants, and yields to the common life only some grudging overplus of its time and strength. Finally, a stage in which this separate life, realizing that it can be nothing by itself, discovers its own blessedness and worth in all that binds it up with the vast whole of being and with the great mass of its fellow-men.

If we can see this movement in the history of our race,

and if we can use these stages of our growth to interpret the long course of human events, it should help to convince us that this earthly life has a meaning, in contemplation of which we need give little heed to the years as they slip behind us on our way. We are to learn to live, and the world of men is slowly being taught to live, in such wise that each separate person, who at first thought himself of no worth or consequence, shall discover in himself an infinite value, as he pours his life, faithfully, into the social relationships that bind him to his kind. He does not exist merely to transmit the spark of being to his successors, and then pass away, or to fill with his mangled being a chasm over which huge empires may pass on their destined way. He lives that in his family, in his neighborhood, in his business, in his nation, and in his world, he may be the faithful builder and upholder of a common righteousness; a common state of order and beauty and peace; and may thereby exalt and glorify himself, as a child of God, a true spiritual being, fit to be received into spiritual realms when he has finished his task on earth.

Let us make a brief illustration of this in the life of the church. That great ecclesiastical structure which the middle ages of our era brought to perfection was modelled, not so much on the teachings of Christ as upon the old-world idea of an institution claiming the individual for its undisputed vassal and slave. For several centuries, now, that kind of church has been in process of slow decay; and the process will still go on. There is no checking or holding it back. The individual has begun to come to his own, and will more and more come to his own in future time, spite of all that ancient hierarchies can do. But now comes the great question, What use

will the individual make of his new-found religious liberty? At present he is very much disposed to use it to throw off the whole burden which the religious culture and education of the world imposes. He is inclined to overlook entirely what the steady discipline of the church has meant in the past, notwithstanding the false and foolish theories that have been adopted into its life, and to see only that he himself can get along very well without the aid of the church. In effect he has become, to great extent, a kind of anarchist in religion. Religious institutions have been hitherto much too oppressive, and so far as he is concerned the world may now get on without religious institutions. He rather inclines to pray for their obliteration. At all events, he troubles himself very little about the building of a new kind of church to take the place of that which is passing away.

Ought not this free man of to-day, who finds that he can live very well apart from the church, to feel more upon his mind and conscience the problem of what is to be the faith of a great people; to realize better that within the current of external affairs there is a deeper stream of spiritual development running through the ages; and that if he has anything to do with that, he must keep in touch somehow with the general spirit of religious life in his time? The kind of individualism which goes apart from the church, if it should grow and spread, would ultimately, it is plain, make an end of the church. Has, then, the individual wholly found himself; is he relating himself adequately to the life of the world in which he lives, unless he makes it part of his concern what the religious consciousness of his race is to become, and somewhere lends his influence and support to a common endeavor after a common faith that shall uphold the best and purest ideals men can form?

I urge these considerations not in any spirit of censure or reproach, but out of a deep conviction that the individualism to which we have thus far attained is still far from being adequate and complete; and that each separate person to find his own life a thing of such value that it is really inspiring and sublime, must live it into the life of our common humanity. I am not thinking only what is to happen to the church, if they who can be free from it refuse any longer to help bear its burdens. I am thinking what our individual freedom is itself likely to come to, if it shall fail to realize its own best opportunity, and fall victim to those selfish distractions which must ultimately turn it back to nothing but ruin and waste. That still incomplete individualism has set its mark, far too much, upon those churches which belong, more particularly, to our modern age. In their modes of worship one feels, too much, some lack of the sense of belonging to a great broad stream of spiritual endeavor, running through the world's life; an exaggerated idea of their own existence, not as a part of but over against the great whole of Christian history. Too much they think of themselves as if they had become detached from the long past, and were now altogether absolved from sympathy with forms of Christianity somewhat different from their sectarian type.

Let me venture, by way of symbol and illustration of what I mean, to call attention to the church in which we are here assembled. Here is a church absolutely and entirely free, owing no allegiance whatever to any power between itself and God. It is a church which leaves every worshipper within its walls also entirely free. It has not the least restriction to impose upon any person's thought or conscience, but is well content that indi-

vidualism shall have its fullest and widest play. Yet it is a church whose worship continually sounds in our ears words which speak of the whole life of Christendom. We say the prayers and sing the hymns which have echoed through the aisles of Christian churches since they were first uttered by the lips of saints in the very dawn of Christian history. We have not cared to keep these exactly as they were first spoken, but have felt free to modify them, that they might fit somewhat more closely to our own life. They still preserve, however, the flavor of that vast common life which binds together the Christian world.

This, to most people, I fancy, seems antiquated and out of date. On the contrary, I dare to say that it is distinctly in advance of the age in which we live. That age lives too much for itself; has too little feeling of a great world-order, in which it is itself included. It is too much absorbed with that special pinnacle of greatness up which it has climbed. It has yet to look about it and to discover how vast a prospect surrounds it on every side; how closely its own summit is linked with the great range of mountain peaks, which tell where humanity has lifted itself up so that earth and heaven could begin to meet. And when men do see that prospect they are no longer so enamoured of what is special and peculiar to themselves. Then the song which best expresses their mood is not something improvised upon the spur of the moment, but something more like a solemn chant of humanity; the words which have been hallowed by ages of sacred use, the expressions of prayer and praise which utter what is in the great world's heart, of longing, and aspiration, and thanksgiving.

I must think that the individual liberty of which we are

so proud and of which we so much boast has this further lesson to learn; the lesson so beautifully set forth over and over in the words of Christ,—“He that would be chief among you, let him be your servant.” “He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” The doctrine that we are to live our lives into the world’s life in any such manner as to have them there lost, swallowed up, and obliterated, works out at last to what are simply horrible conclusions. But Christ’s promise that by living into the world’s life we may find ourselves, and realize, for the first time, with infinite satisfaction what we are and what we were made for,—that is the very Gospel of the liberty of the Sons of God. Perhaps not here on earth can any of us reach the entire fulfilment of that promise, for we are not able to outrun very far the slow unfolding of the consciousness of our race. But, in the promise, is surely written what should be the infinite peace and blessedness of a spiritual world; and with that as the end of our journeying, beyond all the weariness and discomfort of our way, the prospect is bright with an everlasting hope.

THE TRUE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.—*Col. iii. 11.*

We may be a little comforted about some things that annoy and perplex, or even distress us at times beyond measure, if we reflect that they are things not so much inherently bad as out of date at the present day. A great deal of the disturbance of the world comes from the survival of habits and thoughts that were appropriate enough some centuries ago, but which ought by now to have been in part suppressed, if not altogether outgrown and laid aside.

The various existing orders of life, first vegetable and then animal, were built up, we are now given to understand, step by step; higher forms having been gradually evolved from lower till at last man was brought into being. But though, from one point of view, we might consider the earlier creations as a kind of preliminary study for what was afterward to be brought forth; and though the whole life beneath us seems, in a way, the provisional staging erected to assist in the production of our higher capacities and powers, yet for some reason this staging does not tend to disappear as the building approaches completion. On the contrary, it seems to be about as permanent as any part of the structure. The lower orders of existence, having been once brought into being,

continue to propagate themselves as if the whole aim and object of creation were to assure their perpetuation. A few tribes of animals that once roamed the earth, as we know from the discovery of fossil remains, have now become extinct. But for the most part every kind of living and growing thing that ever had place in the unfolding process is still here. The simplest types of organism which mark nature's first attempt to produce living things still survive; and every step by which life has mounted toward its highest triumphs, instead of being abolished when it had served its purpose, is quite carefully preserved in nature's wide economy. It is as if studious care had been exercised to make a museum in which the whole long process, with every intermediate step, might be displayed.

So, when we come to human life, that also has been built up from its rude beginnings to higher and greater things by an innumerable number of small gradations, one superimposed on another like layers of stratified rock. But here again the surprising and somewhat mysterious fact appears to be that pretty much every kind of man who ever existed upon the earth is with us to-day. The various orders and types of humanity as they have appeared from time to time, in ascending scale, have all gone on perpetuating themselves with very little change. There are tribes of savages which must now represent human life much as it was thousands and thousands of years ago; and all the varieties of barbarous and semi-barbarous man, all the shades and grades of what we call the civilized human being, are undoubtedly present in the complex of our society, if we knew how to pick them out and arrange them in proper order.

Now in nature some kind of balance between these

different and often conflicting species is habitually maintained. All of them possess such an astounding vitality that any one of them would soon occupy and fill the whole earth if no curb were put upon its capacity for increase. But nature contrives very well for the most part to keep each one in its limited place. It is only allowed to grow and multiply so far, and then bounds are set for it beyond which it cannot pass. Every now and again, however, this balance gets a little disturbed. Some of the checks by which a more primitive order is kept down to subordinate position are removed, or weakened; and it then looks for a time as if we were quite at the mercy of the pest and scourge thus let loose upon us. Here in the East the ravages of certain kinds of moths and their progeny furnish us with a good example. In such instances an older form of life—a life which once stood at the head of all things so far created, and was then worth preserving with all the energy that nature could put into it—rises up once more, with boundless vigor, to dispute for possession of the earth with all the higher forms of life which are the birth of later time. It looks for a while to those who do not see much beyond the narrow province where such things happen, as if a great and overwhelming catastrophe were about to take place; as if this sort of life that had broken out of bounds might resist all attempts to bring it back under subjection. But never yet has nature failed after a little to restore the balance thus temporarily disturbed, and to force the too destructive agency back into limits where it could not interfere with or endanger the further development of her plan.

I think you already see toward what this illustration points, when applied to what takes place in our human

world. Here, for instance, is a tremendous outbreak of militaristic spirit, which appears to threaten to swamp our whole modern civilization. What is it but a kind of gypsy-moth scourge, in the realm of our social and political life? Militarism, we may suppose, was once the highest type of life to which human beings had anywhere attained; though that, to be sure, was probably so long ago that no record of it is left in our history. But militarism did not die, when that point in human development had been passed. It still lived on, and no matter how ancient it may be, give it a start and it is just as vigorous to-day as ever it has been. In such a country as ours it is only one of the many threads out of which our national life is woven, and there is little risk that it will usurp much more than its proper field of action. But elsewhere a combination of causes has removed some of the restrictions to its growth. Other and on the whole higher types of human life and character, which are later products of the civilizing process and which usually act as a curb upon militarism, for one reason or another, have ceased to operate thus in full force.

The result is that for a time we seem to be taken back to the time of Xerxes or Alexander; and much moan is made that now all the supposed growth of man's higher powers since that earlier day is seen to be weak and worthless. But we may be quite sure that the later growth of mankind is not to be thus undone and obliterated. This spectre of rule by brute force, which has suddenly risen up to confront us, is after all only the ghost of a long buried past, and cannot possibly hold its place in the world of the present day. One way or another, the main stream of human development is sure to close in upon it, and get it back to the cage where it

belongs. The talk about the church and other institutions as having been proven failures, because they have not prevented this outbreak and outburst of the more primitive kind of humanity, will look silly enough after a few more years have passed by. There probably is no way to prevent entirely the recurrence of such happenings, till that particular stamp of human nature has been buried much deeper under an accumulation of the later products of our life than it stands to-day.

There is another instance of the return upon us of what has become archaic and outgrown, to be now witnessed in the religious world. Just at this present we are beholding an uprising of an ancient and discredited type of theology, as if to make an end of everything bearing the name of liberalism and to render it impossible for modern scholarship to get any further hearing in the church. We can refer to this without being open to the charge of indulging in mere sectarian controversy, because the mind of to-day is not asking any favor for its peculiar theories or conjectures; it is asking that the light of proven knowledge be accepted and reckoned with in the formation of religious beliefs, and it is meeting a determined effort to ignore the fact that there is any such new knowledge worth consideration. Perhaps it was the success of the late Pope, in suppressing what was called "Modernism" in Catholic thought, that has put it into the head of the ancient orthodoxy that it could stamp out everything which, from its point of view, is heresy. Certainly a new warfare has been opened upon all modern types of thought.

A popular evangelist, as you may have noticed from newspaper reports, brands with the most opprobrious epithets he can conceive of all those who believe in evolu-

tion. As for what the science of historic criticism has now to say about the Bible, it is quite beneath his contempt, and he has no more use for it than the church once had for the Copernican astronomy. This, to be sure, would not mean much, save that a large number of churches are standing behind and supporting this man. It is not that there is anything bad about him or the type of religion which he represents; but it is the religious life of several generations ago, which has learned nothing, and does not propose to learn anything, from what has since been discovered and thought out. Once more it is making a stand for continuance of the rule that once rightfully belonged to it. The world has really passed on beyond that type of life; but such men do not know it, and are simply trying to ignore and rub out the results of all these later years as if they had not been.

Can any one who is familiar with modern thought be seriously frightened about the results of that undertaking? For the time being, this strenuous and noisy attempt to talk down all the achievements of modern thinking gets most public attention; and perhaps the majority of uninformed people get the impression that all Christian belief which does not conform to ancient standards is about to be swept away. A good many half-hearted friends of the newer types of Christianity are, plainly, more or less scared by the prospect, and are not disposed to venture much upon the permanence of institutions which have taken up more modern ground. Perhaps the attention of such people might be profitably directed to one definite and clear cut historic illustration.

Just after the middle of the seventeenth century, there never was anything, to all appearance, more completely routed and discomfited than the Puritan party in England.

Cromwell was dead, and all his works seemed to have perished with him. The Stuart Dynasty, which had been cut off in the person of Charles the First, came back, in the person of his son, and was stronger than it had ever been before. There can be no doubt but that it imagined its triumph to be final and complete. Once for all, it supposed, an end had been made of liberty in the church and liberty in the state. Bishops were to have their way about reducing the church to absolute uniformity, and the divine right of kings was to suffer no further check from an inconvenient parliament. Upon the surface of affairs it did look as if the long and heroic struggle to safeguard the people's rights had gone for naught, and absolutism had a free and open course to undisputed mastery of the world's affairs. And yet, within the lifetime of a single generation this apparent victory of an older phase of society over a new and better order all faded away into hopeless defeat. Before that century came to an end the House of Stuart had been driven from the throne never to return, the foundations of constitutional government had been laid never to be again removed, and liberty of conscience had become an assured fact which nobody might again call in question.

Such reactions frequently occur. But the powers of destiny are not to be long stayed in their forward movement. New truth, when it has found a lodgment in human hearts, is not to be successfully dealt with by ignoring its presence. Currents of opinion may flow this way or that; but when verifiable truth has been discovered, and convictions have been formed rooted in that truth, no one need be alarmed as to their capacity to make their own way in the world. The older thought does not perish, but neither can it ever again obtain the

control it once held. We are simply frightened with shadows if we think that, because it shows for a time some special activity, it may re-establish the conditions of a former age. When by reason of the clearer utterance of an old truth, or some elimination of ancient error, a new message has been shaped for the hearts of men, they who have it in keeping may go their way undisturbed by the anathemas pronounced against them.

Now the fact that all orders and varieties of human life, once they have been definitely shaped in the mould of time, tend to preserve themselves unchanged in defiance of further modifying influence, gives us a very mixed and diverse world. There are Greeks and Jews; the circumcised and the uncircumcised; Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free; and many other kinds of human beings also which St. Paul did not get into his catalogue. Every kind of man that has ever been on the earth, we may say, is still in existence; and they do not always get on well together. On the contrary, their frictions and antagonisms often fill the world with strife; and this constitutes one of the hardest problems given us to solve, in our efforts to make a peaceful and orderly society. Out of this attempt has grown all the great empires and hierarchies of the past; for the anarchistic idea that strong governments have arisen through the desire of the powerful to oppress the weak, is a very stupid misreading of the facts of life. The whole thing may be seen displayed in India at the present day, where England holds rule, not because her empire is there to exploit weaker races, but because everybody knows that all those different peoples would immediately be at each other's throats were the English power removed. It is absurd to think that so few can anywhere rule so many, did not the many

know that they would be in far worse case without that rule.

Greek and Jew, Barbarian and Scythian, being animated by fierce racial prejudice and antagonism, are often quite ready to fight to the death, rather than occupy the same planet peaceably, side by side; and that makes the problem which good and wise men have sought to solve by the establishment of some central and wide reaching authority that is able to compel them to keep the peace. But it is obvious that the difficulty has been only partially met and overcome in this way. These huge empires may hold such hatreds in leash, but they do not cure them. They spring forth in full force the moment that the central authority is weakened. Moreover, empires themselves easily get infected with the same spirit, and then we have belligerency on a much bigger scale than when the warring tribes are left to their own devices.

Is there then no cure? Does variety in human life inevitably mean internecine strife? Is there to be no peace on earth save as men are held to it by the strong hand of arbitrary power, or where they are all reduced to the image of one common pattern, like coins struck in the same mint? Can we not have different nationalities without having ceaseless antagonism between them? May not the church divide into separate households of faith, and still not waste half its energies in sectarian controversy?

Surely there is a remedy for all this which, here and there, has been effectively applied. Christianity was in its origin, one may say, the biggest and most successful peace movement ever launched; and the words of its greatest Apostle give us the clue to its success. When he said that in the mental and spiritual realm which he and

his friends had come to occupy, there was no longer Greek or Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, he did not mean of course that the physical differences and peculiarities denoted by these names had ceased to exist; he meant that they had ceased to be noted or remarked, as if they were of the least consequence to anybody.

One man might be dark and another fair; one might be short and another tall; one set of features might be cast in the Semitic and another in the Aryan mould; but what did it signify? They had all come together in the new order of Christian discipleship, and such minor, inconsequential differences had been lost out of sight in the light of the new truths and hopes they had come to entertain. As disciples of Christ, or "in Christ" as they said, they found themselves spiritual men, not mere creatures of flesh and blood; and as spiritual men they were so bound together in bonds of love and sympathy that they had no more battles to fight, but were ready to be each other's helpers in all situations and emergencies. This is what Christianity undoubtedly was, till the inspiration of Christ's own teaching was lost, like a river in sand, among the arid speculations of the world outside. For true Christianity did then very nearly disappear, and as it were, run underground for centuries, till now it is just beginning again to reappear.

And this undoubtedly is what its Founder meant it to be, a great and growing peace-making influence among the warring nations of the earth. His saying that he had come to send not peace, but a sword, is sometimes cited as if it disproved this view; as if his spirit too was as militant as that of the Arabian Prophet. But in this he was simply declaring what oppositions he knew the new faith would have to encounter. He never intended that

his followers should fight among themselves, and he never even counselled them to take the sword in their own defence. The immediate effect of his mission would be strife rather than peace, because the world was so much against him. But his great command to his disciples was that they should love one another; and the love that they bore to each other did come to be the remark and the wonder of all beholders, so long as his precept and example made the dominating force in their minds.

Now the way which this illustrates and makes plain is the only way in which any secure and lasting peace can be established among men. It seems so long a way that many will take no interest in it, but are bent upon finding a shorter road. There is, however, no shorter path. So long as the dominant fact in a man's mind is that he is a Greek, or a Jew, so long he is bound to be more or less at loggerheads with the rest of mankind. That supreme race consciousness, inevitably means a certain amount of race antagonism. He has to learn that he is some other and higher thing than either a Greek or a Jew, and then this accident of birth falls to its true place of relative insignificance. We can see how, to some extent, men of all races are learning this lesson here in our own country; how the fact that they were born here or there, of this or that racial stock, ceases to mean so much to them as that they are now Americans, citizens of a new country that gives every man his chance.

It is upon the learning of this lesson that we must place our hope of peace. Christianity ought to be able to teach the peoples that have espoused it as the way of salvation, that they have interests, as children of God, which far precede and transcend any interests they may

have as members of a certain race; and that, in the higher place they are asked to take as spiritual beings, distinctions between Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, are of slight importance. Whether it can sufficiently instill this lesson into the mind of humanity, and how long it will be before the lesson begins to take effect, only time will show. But there is no large prospect of securing a stable and certain peace otherwise; for until some such lesson is learned peace is likely to last only long enough for the memory of the horrors of the last war to wear away.

But why need you and I determine our action upon the question whether or not mankind is likely to acquire this wisdom, within any future that we can foresee and provide for? We ourselves can find entrance to the realm where there is no longer Greek or Jew, whether the rest of the world gets there or not. We may believe if we choose that a considerable part of our race is always going to love strife better than peace. But that need not influence our decision that we ourselves are far better off, and can get far more out of life, when we climb far enough above party names and party lines to be able to sympathize with all good people everywhere. Nothing seems to me nobler, or more characteristic of the newer Christianity of our time, than this broad catholicity of spirit. Indeed, the only really catholic church I know is composed of those who have thus ceased to think of the dividing walls of Christendom as any bar to fellowship and respect.

We may have our peculiar beliefs because, if we are honest, we must think as it is given us to think. But why should we imagine that all other people must think just as we do in order to be good and true? And if they are good and true we ought to desire and seek their

society, not cut ourselves off from them as if they were sources of contamination. Wherever one type of Christian is heard, or even felt, denouncing another type of Christian, it may be taken for granted that Christianity is weak or wanting in that mind. Its spirit does not work that way. Ignorance may account largely for this prejudice, but if one has much of the vision of Christ he cannot be thus ignorant; for then he lives in a realm of the spirit which altogether overlooks the petty boundaries amid which prejudice has its home.

History concerns itself very largely with the story of the fierce antagonisms that lie upon the surface of events, and we perhaps get the impression that this is substantially all there was of the life of the past. But in all ages I think the bigger thing has been the deeper currents, not so much torn by this superficial strife. Always there are people in the world—more people than perhaps we know, and more widely distributed among all classes of men—to whom such conflicts are not welcome; who will themselves bear little part in them, but cherish a spirit of unfailing friendliness toward sincere and honest people wherever they may be. That company any of us can join, if we will. We can be loyal to our own without feeling the least unfriendliness toward another nationality, or another household of faith. And perhaps there is no surer mark of the growth of spiritual life than the increase of this breadth of sympathy.

It is not that one ceases to react against the wrongs and errors and follies of earth. It is that he begins to see something in all human life much greater than these shortcomings. And the desirable thing then seems to be not so much to lead men out of one walled enclosure into another, as to lead them up where they may partly

forget such divisions in the enjoyment of a larger good. In anything so big and so sublime as is the spirit of Christ there is ample room for Greek and Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free; and the only complete emancipation we can ever know is to be set free into such larger liberty as is to be found in him.

THE SONS OF GOD.

Our Father which art in heaven.—MATT. vi. 9.

The idea that some men had been or were “Sons of God” was not unfamiliar to the world when Jesus chose this name, “Our Father,” by which to designate the supreme authority of the universe. As he used the name it meant, of course, vastly more than it had meant before; and yet he did but unfold a truth, perhaps, whose germ had long lain unfruitful in the deeper consciousness of mankind. In earlier religions there had been a plentiful array of myths which held certain heroes to be, in part, the children of a divine parentage. Many of the Greek deities were said to be sons of the gods by human mothers; and the myth-making faculty, therefore, had that idea well fixed in mind when Christianity began its career.

But what is a myth? The mere exhalation of a popular fancy? A story which grows up, one knows not how, out of nothingness, having no seed and no root from which it springs? It would appear to be, in a great deal of rather superficial thought, thus sufficiently described; though I should think that view might itself be fairly called nothing more than a myth about myths. This mythical element is always the popular embodiment of certain perceptions of the common mind which are apt to have in them some grain of truth. Take the stories that grow up about any noted character in our

later history. They may have little, if any, historic foundation, but they illustrate the popular idea of the ruling traits of character of these exceptional minds. In themselves they may be altogether fictitious, but they display what is felt to be the truth about the kind of life those men lived. So, I think, with the myths about ancient deities; they had their roots in the perception of some kind of spiritual truth. They were not meaningless tales about fanciful beings, but were stories designed to illustrate some aspect of the realities of spiritual existence.

How should one account for great genius of any sort, far surpassing the capacity of ordinary men? With all our knowledge of the laws of heredity, the extraordinary gifts of these greatest minds are almost as much a mystery to us as to people in ancient days. Who can account even for his own mental life? Who knows where his thoughts come from, and how certain great impulses arise in his inward being? It must have seemed to men in old days that the strength and wisdom and skill of heroic souls came from a higher than human origin. Many a reflective mind must have felt that its own consciousness was being fed through connection with an unseen world. That perception and feeling as of something higher than man, which here and there entered into him to enlarge indefinitely the power and reach of his faculties, was, I suppose, the root out of which grew these myths about certain characters in history which were said to be half human and half divine.

Now if we deepen that feeling, as of a bond of connection between our human minds and the greater mind of Deity, into a strong personal conviction and experience, we may perhaps see the reason why Jesus called

God his Father, and declared himself to be God's son. It is not conceivable that any story told to him by his mother, concerning the miracle of his birth, should have wrought this conviction within him; and all who make any study of his life should realize that this conviction was a great deal more than a mere theory of his understanding. One might call it a fixed idea of his mind; something like an insane delusion, if you please, only it is most plain that he was not insane. The author of the Parables was not a person of unsound mind. But the persuasion of being God's son possessed his whole mind and soul, as much as does the fixed idea of a demented spirit; and I know of nothing else that can so enter into and pervade a man's whole being, save a living experience, which is as certain to him as his existence. How did he know that he was a son of God? Because, I suppose, what is with many of us a reasonable conjecture—that our spirits are informed and nurtured and sustained through the bond that unites them to the Universal Spirit—was to him the primal certainty of experience. He knew it was so, because he felt the bond that united him to his Father in the unseen, as truly as we feel the love and care of an earthly parent; because he was daily instructed and helped by that spiritual presence, as much as we, in childhood, are taught and upheld by a father in the flesh.

If we try to approach this conviction of his through the speech and characteristic thought of our own time, we might begin with the saying of a modern philosopher, who was commonly looked upon as belonging to the extremely skeptical school so far as the things of the spirit are concerned, that what we call consciousness in ourselves must be the "welling up in us" of what he called the

infinite and eternal energy. That is to say, our consciousness is something more than a product of our brains. The root of all pessimism and despair about human nature, very probably, is that same notion, that mind results altogether from the functioning of this earthly organism, and that, apart from this organism, mind cannot exist. The fear that this may be so perhaps grips us all, now and again, as with a hand of ice, though we can scarcely entertain a more unreasonable supposition.

We have now learned how, by rapidly whirling an armature within the field of a collection of magnets, to "generate," as we say, an enormous force of electricity. But does any one suppose that the revolving dynamo actually makes electricity there in the machine? If so, it is a very ignorant conjecture. All the whirling wheels that Niagara can set in motion do not suffice to create the least fraction of electric power. They simply change the force of gravity that is in the falling water over into this other kind of force. And the electricity which is taken from those machines, to be distributed far and wide, is nothing new under the sun, for the whole earth and atmosphere about us are already full of it. From the beginning, men have seen it in the thunder-storm and in the Northern Aurora, and we now know that vast currents of it continually play around and through the earth which we inhabit.

How can any one think that the physical machinery of our being creates in us the power of consciousness? To some extent, perhaps, it may transform other forces into that higher state, though we have not the least hint of a process by which such a transformation can be effected. Meanwhile, it would seem to be transparently evident to thought and understanding, that the big

universe is just as much charged with consciousness as with electricity. We do not merely imagine that there is, or may be, a spirit whose presence, as the Psalmist said, "besets us behind and before." We know, as much as we know anything, by the signs and tokens given us to interpret, that it is there. The organic realm, at least, is unquestionably full of it. No biologist of repute would now think for a moment of denying it. If we infer anything from the perfection and regularity of nature's laws, we can only infer that there is consciousness everywhere. We are not required to think of it as being exactly like our consciousness, but it is of kin to that. The Spirit of the Universe is in us, in some sense making us its instruments, and building up in us the highest finite life, so far as we know, that it anywhere contains. This is not random and fanciful imagination: it is the real truth of our situation, so far as the best faculties we possess are able to grasp that truth.

Now, if the spirit that is in us meets and mingles with, and makes part of, a spirit that fills and floods existence everywhere, then it ought to be possible for that communion to be brought within the sphere of our self-consciousness, so that we can know it, and feel it, and rejoice in it, as, on the whole, the greatest and most glorious fact of our experience. This self-consciousness of ours has, we know, as yet only a limited grasp of the currents of being that pass through us. Over these swift movements it plays, like a searchlight over the waters of a wide river, taking in only a part of their whole flow. We are not much aware of the extent to which a deeper than our own consciousness—one which has all the purity and peace of celestial spaces, and is free from every taint of earthly passion—does come into and mingle with

the stream of our own little life. But suppose ourselves capable of bringing that hidden process forward into the light of conscious experience! how might we be thrilled with it! What ineffable joy thus to drink directly and knowingly from the founts by which all being is supplied! What heavenly bliss, with which no other pleasure could be compared, thus to receive, as from the heart of God himself, new supplies of strength, and calmness, and sympathy, and love!

And this, we may well believe, was the daily and hourly experience of Jesus of Nazareth, whom we call Christ. So far as we can understand his mind and character, he had that wonderful sense of being all the time informed and directed and upheld by this unseen divine presence. God was to him as a father, and he was to God as a son. And this was not a matter of imagination; it was his intense and joyous realization of what must be true of all of us: that in Him, as Saint Paul said, we live, and move, and have our being.

But never did he claim this experience as something that belonged, and must always belong, to him alone. The Gospel of John, which represents him as saying "My Father and I are one," also contains his prayer, that his disciples may be drawn into the same blessed union: "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Words can hardly be more explicit; and, as a comment upon his teaching that he and they together should say "Our Father in heaven," they are words which point to an inevitable conclusion. He wished all to be consciously sons of God, as he called himself a son of God. He desired that all should share the experience which made existence so sacred and so magnificent in his regard. If he had any mission, as the

Messiah of his people, it was to lead men into a kingdom of the spirit where, as children of God, they could live in happy trust and confidence, hope being their only motive, and love their only guide.

I do not myself think that he was under any illusion about this as if it were a perfectly natural and easy transition for all to make. He who said of a rich man, that it was easier for a camel to squeeze through the small gate called the "Needle's eye" than for that man to get into the kingdom, and who said to Nicodemus, You must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God, did not underrate the worth of what had come to him in his own experience or the difficulty through which others must pass to reach that experience. It is quite natural for one who has seen a new truth, or made a new discovery, to feel as if everybody, at least with slight effort, might come forward to see and feel what he has seen and felt. But that, in this instance, would be as if the high-powered telescope, which had seen a new star, should expect every low-powered telescope, being turned to the right quarter of the heavens, to report the same appearance. Human minds differ vastly more than telescopes in their capacity to derive from the world surrounding them the higher truths of experience.

I do not think Christ made the mistake of supposing that it was perfectly natural and simple for anybody and everybody to follow on where he had led the way. What had come to him he regarded as something very wonderful, almost, if not quite, unheard of in the annals of mankind before. If at first he had dreamed of introducing many at once to that spiritual realm where he dwelt, the attempt to convert the personal loyalty of his followers into intelligent appreciation of his message to mankind

must have undeceived him. It is plain upon the face of the record that, much as these disciples loved him, and boundlessly as they trusted him, they had only the faintest glimmer of understanding of the real reach and scope of his ideas.

It has been the misfortune of some later thought—groping after Christ's doctrine of God's fatherhood and the divine sonship of man—to spread the impression, as if that were so easy that any human being could understand it, and any weak heart could practise it. This impression I take to be, in part, the misunderstanding of those who do not really want to know what Christ's doctrine truly was. But, also, it comes from the preaching of those who seem to think that they have given all that he had to impart, when they proclaim a theoretical divine fatherhood. It is as if we had only to say that we are sons of God, and straightway take our place by the side of the great author of our Christian faith. This, indeed, does fearfully cheapen the gospel we are privileged to cherish. For, to the observer, it is so plain as to be sometimes sickening, that one can talk of being God's child without ever having experienced in himself one single touch of filial love and trust; and to those who do try to live by the great ideas which faith puts before them, it comes home sometimes, with tragic seriousness, how wide the gulf may be between the beliefs of the head and the living realities of the heart.

But, however lesser minds may misconceive what it means to live here on this earth in conscious desire and feeling as a son of God, it seems quite certain that Jesus himself realized what a mountain of difficulty the ordinary mind must climb, in order to reach the high places of the spirit where he stood. He never put forth his

gospel as a cheap nostrum that any soul could buy at trifling cost, or take with ease in such wise as to find itself translated to the skies. He who was continually talking to his followers about taking up their cross and following him, knew perfectly what there was to pay for the privilege of entering into realms of spiritual life. When one speaks of his desire to have all men share his experience, this is not to be construed as if he thought that all men could do this, with some trifling change in their disposition and habits of thought. At the same time, he saw that what he had to give was not only desirable for all, but absolutely indispensable for all, if ever the world was to get out of its low and distressed condition. There might be a mountain for the common mind to climb, but it was one that must be climbed. There was no way to go through it or around it, and the path of humanity's progress lay straight over that summit. If the world moved forward at all, it must be up that steep ascent where he called it to go: there was no other way. And it does seem as if now, after nearly two thousand years more of experiment, our race might begin to see the truth of what he taught.

It is hard for us, we say, to enter into his thoughts, and reproduce in ourselves his experience. So it is; and this is therefore no task to commend itself to those who are bent on saving the world by wholesale, by some scheme that does not much involve its own endeavor, or even its consent. It is hard; but it is only as you and I, and others who are willing to accept this hardness, strive after this high achievement, that the better life of the world gets on one step. I wish to be as explicit as words will permit, in stating my thought that Christ's doctrine of the fatherhood of God is the very key to that better future

of which the world dreams, and that some growth into a living realization of that great truth is the very first step the heart of mankind has to take toward an ideal life.

It may be noted that many extreme Socialists have become avowedly atheistic, not, however, on speculative but entirely on practical grounds. They are bent on the abolition from industry of what they call the "boss system," and they have divined that the idea of God as what they call "infinite boss" stands squarely athwart the line of their endeavor. In their wild, rough way they are partly right. At all events, they have seen, what some wiser heads than theirs do not appear to have discerned, that the kind of religion a people cherishes, leaves its impress on all their working thoughts and aims; and that, if you change very much the character of a nation, you will have, first of all, to change its religion. Now the idea of God merely as an embodiment of arbitrary power, such a Deity as would elect certain people to endless bliss and others to eternal woe, merely because it was his pleasure so to do,—such an idea is sure to set its stamp on the whole civilization of a race which holds it. You might as well expect democratic tendencies to flourish under the dynasty of the Stuart kings as to expect ideas and feelings of human brotherhood to spread where such conceptions of a divine government prevail.

Men are not brothers unless they have one common father. That is the fallacy of Socialism; that it can develop a stable and lasting sense of brotherhood without the recognition of any spiritual tie that really makes men kin. What brotherhood is there among lions and wolves? There may be a league of offence or defence against a common foe; but banish the foe, and their willingness

to stand together disappears. That degree of co-operation, and no more, is possible to men, while no bond has been forged between them in their spiritual being. Suppose Socialism to be successful in its fight against capitalism. Suppose that what it recognizes as a common foe were utterly destroyed. The moment which saw that triumph of Socialism would also see every tie which now unites these masses of men dissolving like so many ropes of sand. With no belief in God as the common father of men, and no feeling that one is made, by the very nature and constitution of his being, his brother's keeper, men can only stand together in their more militant moods; and when peace comes to them it can be nothing but the prelude to an awakening of internecine strife. That, undoubtedly, is one great trouble with our whole modern society. We have set up the forms of a common good, while, as yet, to no very great extent are men brothers and friends at heart. We even go on with this great modern experiment of ours, not believing that men ever can be brothers and friends at heart, in almost utter neglect of the only means by which the doctrine of human brotherhood can ever be made more than a cold and glittering generality. Men are not brothers unless there is something to make them one.

And that something cannot possibly be found in the world of material interests. The attempt to make union out of a combination of selfish desires, in the nature of the case, can be nothing but a temporary expedient. The occasion passes, and the combination falls apart. There was once a theory that this national union of ours stood on such a basis; that merely for their mutual worldly advantage certain communities had come together to form a sovereign state; and that, when worldly

advantage pointed a different road, the sovereign state would have to be sacrificed. It took four long years of war to vindicate a different theory, that the nation was founded on a common sentiment, and that once in there was no getting out of it, whatever selfish interests might dictate. There is no real brotherhood of men till it is seen to be equally inevitable. The kind of brotherhood that one can slip into or out of at pleasure is so poor a thing that every sensible person has a right to despise it. That idea, to be worth anything, has to be founded in the spiritual realm.

As a matter of fact, no other tie has been quite so strong to hold men together, throughout the past, as the tie of religion. Men of all races will stand together under the symbols of a common faith, as scarcely any other sentiment can hold them. Broaden your religion, then, to make all men brothers,—as Jews and Mohammedans and different bands of Christians are now brethren, each within the narrow limits of a partial faith,—and you have the only real basis for the universal brotherhood of man. You say this is a long, slow process! Undoubtedly. But it is the only sure one; and when the world learns the futility of all its short cuts to the kingdom of heaven, it will come back to realize the supreme wisdom of Christ in pointing out for it a spiritual road.

The kingdom of heaven among men begins with a sense of the fatherhood of God. It can begin nowhere else. Spiritually we are one, because the same great life is in us all. It has been the glory of the Catholic Church—a glory great enough to atone for many faults and follies—that at her altars there were no rich and poor, no high and low degrees, but just so many human souls, waiting there to meet their God. There is a parable of what this

whole world needs. Let any mind feel, even in some dim and far-off way, what Jesus felt, that the supreme and overmastering fact of its existence is the tie that binds it to the Infinite Father in heaven, and it must say, as Jesus said, of every other who tries to do the will of God, "Behold my brother, and my sister, and my mother."

If we talk of saving the world, there is no power save only the growth of such feelings which can ever accomplish that feat. If we talk of saving ourselves, the only salvation we ought to dream of is that of getting into a sphere of being where we can think and feel like that; being so secure within the warmth of our father's house that we can only remember with pure compassion those who still wander in the cold and darkness of an outer night.

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.—**Hebrews xi. 8.**

Some of us were lately listening in this place to the counsel of a learned man, who spoke out of wide knowledge concerning the sources of our Christian faith, and who applied some of his conclusions about its failures and successes in the earlier part of our era to the situation of the Church as it now stands confronting the duties and opportunities of the future.* He had been telling us how one branch of Christianity, planted in the valley of the Euphrates, came to naught, because, for one reason, there was an attempt to impose upon it Western forms of thought, not easily assimilated by the Eastern mind. His suggestion was that now we have come to a period when many forms of thought in which Christianity was dressed by the Greco-Roman mind are equally alien to the natural mental habit in which a great portion of our modern world is being trained. Only disaster, he thought, could be predicted of the determination still to perpetuate ideas which, however interesting as a part of ancient history, have no real root in modern thinking.

Christianity is, first of all, a life and an experience. This life inevitably takes to itself forms of thought that seem appropriate as an explanation of what it finds in its inmost heart. But this learned man advises us, for the time being, to pay less attention to what some have

*A lecture in King's Chapel by Professor Kirsopp Lake, of the University of Leyden.

called the "thought side of religion," in order to concentrate our attention more upon the life; and then to wait for forms of thought to emerge that will be better for our purposes than many of those which still live among us by tradition.

This is, without doubt, most excellent advice. Perhaps we might say that in the case of large numbers of Christians it is, for this present, about all the advice they need. The modern movement in the church, generally called "liberalism," has been marked, from the beginning, both by a decline of dogmatic interest and by increase of emphasis on the kind of life of which Christ is the great example. The reproach of these liberals, all along, has been that they did not believe enough and depended too much on a good moral character. In fact, however, they have had, in some ways, a great deal more faith than many of their neighbors who accused them; and, while the life has seemed to them all-important, they have not been given to vaunting their own righteousness. It is probable that the rest of the Christian world needs to travel that same road; to give up some amount of belief which has little, if anything, to do with the real welfare of human souls, and to spend a great deal more time and thought upon doing the things that Christ said. To this extent the counsel of our learned instructor is wise and right, and it agrees with some very hopeful movements of the present Christian mind. For there has arisen, again, a great passion to bring in some kind of actual kingdom of heaven among men; and what people are to believe has now become, with a large portion of our existing world, almost a negligible affair.

But I must suppose that this advice—to do rather than to think—is intended to be no more than *ad interim* coun-

sel, and that the time is already upon us when the forms of faith have become once more a matter of urgent necessity. The motives which sustain the highest kind of action appear to have their origin, it is true, elsewhere than in man's philosophy. Yet he is by nature a reflective being. All his experience is sure to be brought under critical review; and no passion for doing is apt to be long sustained unless it can call to its aid a reasonable belief, to make such action seem worth while.

The alliance of our intellectual faculties is indispensable to steady continuance of high endeavor; and the subtle poison of intellectual doubt, even though there may not be very much of it, often spreads a sort of paralysis through the whole spiritual being. For this reason, though it may answer for a time to give up thinking, in order to apply one's self more entirely to all good works, it soon becomes necessary to give attention to the repair or reconstruction of one's house of faith. Forms of belief cannot be indefinitely neglected, and, however the case may stand with portions of the Christian world with which I am not myself much familiar, I am sure that with us it is high time to be taking account of that mental structure in which the heart's faith is to shelter itself through coming time.

When we come to consider how the thought of Christendom is now shaping itself, there are some points which appear to be beyond all question. A large array of doctrines, which made part of the inheritance received from a remote past, is now dropping out of notice. A century ago, when modern tendencies in religion became pronounced and threatening, there was an immediate and most strenuous rally to the defence of these doctrines. The Church was full of acrimonious controversy. To-

day you may visit church after church, of almost every known denomination, and never hear these doctrines mentioned, save in some formal and incidental way. It is not that their defenders have met the attack and are now at ease concerning their security. It is, as any one can see, that they care far less about them. They are thinking of other matters. Even where there is studious attempt to defend the old doctrines, the phraseology of former days is so filled with new meanings that theologians of the past would have some difficulty in recognizing the work of their own minds, as now expounded and interpreted.

On the whole, the forms of thought produced in Greco-Roman times are not being very industriously pressed home upon the mind of this generation; and the tendency is to make less and less of them, wherever people are really thinking about religious themes. Of this we may make confident assertion; and so far as this our professor's advice coincides with the whole drift of this modern age.

On one other point we can hardly miss the mark; and that is the growing interest in the ethical content of the Christian gospel. Everywhere that now comes to the front as an affair of supreme and overmastering importance. What we want is to reproduce the experience, the spirit, the conduct, and the character of Christ, or so much of this as may be possible, in the minds and the lives of living men. It does not matter so much what people think about him: it matters everything that they and the world should grow to be like him. My belief as to his nature and origin may be important to me, but I am not going to insist that others shall share these beliefs, if only they will be Christ-like in their deeds and lives. That, I should say, is the highly characteristic

attitude of the educated and cultivated Christian of to-day. The emphasis lies on practical righteousness,—on blamelessness and elevation of character. Whatever may seem to conflict with this valuation lives on rather as a formal repetition of what has been than as a part of our life to-day. Here, again, we find the world taking just that path which scholarship urges it to pursue. It is abandoning a considerable amount of speculative thought which no longer answers its need; and it is turning its attention more and more to the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity.

What next? Is this the whole of that adaptation of Christianity to modern life which we suppose is now in process of being made? If so, the end of that process is left quite vague and undefined; for we have thus far touched no hint of a principle by which to determine what, among the theological beliefs of the past, shall be surrendered and what retained. Some of those forms of thought which Greek Christianity imposed upon the primitive gospel of the Apostolic Church have become meaningless to us. But which are they? How much needs to be pruned away? Or is the whole fabric of belief in the Church ultimately to be outgrown and abandoned?

There has been founded in our day a somewhat significant movement called Ethical Culture, whose aim is exceedingly lofty and noble, and which has been carried forward by a company of scholarly, high-minded men. In Ethical Culture the tendency to exalt life and to deprecate mere belief has apparently reached its extreme. The movement is not, for example, atheistic, and it wages no open warfare upon any religious doctrine. It simply says, by its attitude, that such things are scarcely worth talking about. What we have to do, in its view, is to

build up the ethical nature of humanity, and for this purpose it does not signify whether people have religious beliefs or have them not: only, if they set much store by such beliefs, that is apt to detract from their service of ethical ideals.

Since Ethical Culture began, another movement has sprung up, almost opposite in character, which has had an astonishing career. Christian Science betrays nothing more than an incidental interest in the good life. The desire for a higher righteousness is scarcely in the least a spring of its wonderful vitality. What it does have is rather an elaborate philosophy of the way in which spiritual powers may be made available for the help and healing, largely of mankind's bodily ills. It is all a kind of religion, not so very different in substance from that which makes pilgrimages to the fountain of Lourdes; though it is accepted by thousands who would never dream of visiting the waters of that celebrated place.

Here, then, are two movements indigenous to the life of this present age,—native, as it were, to the soil of the modern world. Old world forms of thought have been with them almost entirely shaken off, and no "dead hand" cramps the manifestation of their energies. One of them is all ethics, with practically no religion: the other is all religion, with practically no distinctive ethical teaching. Of the two, one might predict, in the light of experience, that the latter would have the longer and the more picturesque career, since religion has always been better able to live without ethics than ever ethics could live without religion.

But suppose the two could somehow be combined and welded together into one, for faith and works never were intended to go separate roads. It was designed that they

should walk always hand in hand. Suppose Ethical Culture might add to itself two things: first, a strong and ardent belief in a future life for the human soul; and, secondly, an abiding consciousness of and trust in some kind of surrounding spiritual world, whose influence is all interwoven with the daily happenings of that realm where we now dwell. We should then have something which observation shows us to be a natural product of our life at this present time, something, moreover, which, in spirit at least, closely corresponds to that gospel which the disciples of Christ first took out into the world.

For Ethical Culture, plus the idea of an immortal life and plus the belief in a spiritual world continually pouring its energies into this world of sense, was, in essence, primitive Christianity, so far as its message to mankind was concerned. What it had to preach was the new kingdom of righteousness, the resurrection, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This, as it seems to me, still constitutes the outline of essential Christianity. These are its three great fundamental ideas: the new kingdom of God on earth; the immortal life before us; and the ever-present, unseen power of the divine life that is over us. Originally, these ideas, in their gospel form, gained an advantage far above any which abstract statement is ever likely to give them, as they went out into the world illustrated by and embodied in the wondrous personality of Christ. That priceless advantage still belongs to the Christian tradition, whenever its original meanings shine through the accretions which time has piled on top of it. Still, that great personality is the epitome and symbol of the whole of its sublime faith; and belief in Christ, whatever other strange and inconsistent notions have become at-

tached to it, can hardly be prevented from carrying to the heart some implication of these three fundamental aspirations of the soul,—peace and good-will on earth, a life of blessedness beyond, and the companionship of that spiritual world which adds to whatever we achieve its benefits and blessings.

The effort of modern Christianity is to get back to or get down to this essential element of its own existence, to remove enough extraneous forms of thought so that it can recover this treasure which the dust and controversy of the past have too much obscured. One may predict that in the end forms of thought which are in any way hostile to the spirit of these ideas will have to go, but that, whatever happens, nothing will ever persuade the Christian world to give up one iota of the great spiritual inheritance which may be summed up by the three ideas I have named.

Christianity, for example, never can be turned into Ethical Culture; for, though it would be meaningless and valueless stripped of its ethical side, yet, while it lives among men, it will forever insist that man is also an immortal being, that his life is being fed, daily and hourly, from the unseen world of the spirit, and that, without this spiritual world above us and before us, our moral hopes are little more than illusions and dreams.

But now it remains to be said that these are all ideas of which we lay hold not through knowledge, but by faith. Perhaps that is why they seem to have lost their hold somewhat upon a scientific age. The scientific mind, for a time, was rather oblivious of the extent to which its own ideas were based upon and even compounded of pure faith. It half persuaded itself and the world that it must venture into no paths where knowl-

edge could not lead the way, though now all that is worthy the name of science takes a quite different attitude. In point of fact we should never add a single grain to our knowledge if that counsel prevailed. All the time we are venturing, on some larger or smaller balance of probability, out into the unknown, that we may extend the range of our experience and make additions to our mental store.

There is nothing very mysterious about religious faith or very different from the whole conduct of life. It is, like every other trial and experiment we make, an adventure, and it consists almost altogether in simply saying, "I dare!" Well does the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews make the patriarch Abraham a living type of what faith is. Abram, as the story goes, while still dwelling in the land of Haran, heard a voice bidding him go out from his father's home and country into a new land to the West, where he was to be the founder of a great nation. He was entirely comfortable and prosperous where he was, and he knew nothing of the country beyond that through which he was accustomed to graze his flocks. But this voice had come to him, bidding him go out into that unknown land, as mysterious promptings and invitations have come to the pioneer in all ages. What the voice was like which Abram heard we cannot say, but the command was not very different from that which every pioneer obeys. Even that promise of becoming the seed of a great nation is part of the dream which has lured many adventurous feet into the unbroken wilderness.

But the great point is that Abram dared to obey. It took courage to make the decision. It was a supreme act of will. There he was, doing well enough from a worldly

point of view. Why should he forsake his one bird in the hand for any two that might be in the bush? How was he to assure himself that the voice he had heard knew whereof it spoke, or was not wickedly tempting him to embark on a ruinous enterprise? Somehow, Abram believed the voice was to be trusted; and, having made that determination, he put all doubts behind him. He went out, not knowing whither he went.

That is faith! Our whole life is really full of it. We are exercising it every day we live. When we come to the field of religious effort and religious belief, we are not required to bring into play any hitherto unused faculty. It is only a question of being ready there, as we are ready elsewhere, to act on reasonable probabilities, and go forward with courageous hearts, trusting to find true what cannot yet be proven. That kingdom of God among men! Who can show us that it is certain to come? How much pretext we have to think that the world is incapable of finding its way through the problems and difficulties that confront us, to any satisfactory conclusions! In the light of our own experience, who can blame very much those children of Israel who felt that the promised land which Moses had set before them was nothing but a myth? They were enduring quite as many hardships as they had been forced to endure in Egypt, and there was still no sign that they were approaching the end of their wanderings. So there are plenty to tell us now that the world does not make any real moral progress, and that there is no reason to think it ever will get much farther along the road to an ideal society than it stands to-day.

But the man of faith says there simply has to be a kingdom of heaven somewhere before us on our journey-

ing. Human life is nothing but a muddle of clashing and conflicting interests, something worse than a hopeless enigma, unless there is a possible and a passable way by which civilization shall finally pass to a state where it can rest from its life-and-death grapple with the vices by which it is now afflicted. And, when faith has heard the voice telling it of that new country which it is yet to find, it turns away from all its doubts to work, through unnumbered defeats and discouragements, for the better day that will some time arrive. Other men may demonstrate to their hearts' content that the movement of human life is nothing more than the ebbing and flowing of the tides of the sea. Faith knows that there is a real current to the river of time, and that the fortunes of mankind are to be borne at last out of shoals and rapids to the open sea.

So of that new life which awaits us when our individual course on earth is finished. We have no way to see what is before us there; and, though I am not willing to admit that, literally, it is a "bourne from which no traveller returns," it is plain that all evidence is open to the challenge of a distrustful mind. But here, too, faith, fronting all doubts, stands up to say, "It has to be that this is true. This world is not a reasonable place if it were false. And since, in the name of reason, to make of this a rational universe, my inmost soul tells me that my life has this continuance in a world to come, away with fears and qualms about this pathway into the unknown! Here also I will go out, not knowing whither I go; knowing only that I am called, and that the call means more than at this present I am able to understand."

Finally, of that third idea, the presence with us at every moment of spiritual powers whose might we cannot

measure, but whose co-operation with us renders life's battle easier and its dangers less! Of that, too, we can, if we choose, entertain unending doubt. When I think that I have been helped, who shall prove to my questioning intellect that it is not mere coincidence instead of cause? How shall I show the scornful materialist that my trust in the spirit is to be differentiated from the belief of the savage in his fetishes and charms? Faith is the act of will which puts away all these quibbling suggestions of uncertainty. Surveying the whole field of life and receiving therefrom a distinct impression that the spiritual world exists, it chooses to follow that great central certainty, and stop the inward debate as to whether anything does come to us from the unseen. Suppose I cannot find the border-line between sense and spirit. Suppose all sorts of foolishness result when men think they know more of the ways of the Spirit than it has been given them to discover. None the less I have heard the call of the spiritual world. I know that, when I have gone as far as I can into the realities of existence, there is still a beyond, and that this farther realm is part of my inmost life. It is there that my life is rooted, there that I most truly live; and out of those deeps of being come the strength, the wonder, and the glory of my existence.

Why, then, do we still stand questioning whether such things are true? The higher world, to which we are forever being summoned, is as real as this on which our feet are planted. We do not yet behold it, but we have heard its call. Let us at least start toward it with resolute and hopeful hearts,—even with expectations of an unimagined splendor that awaits us, though thus we, too, set forth, not knowing whither we go.

THE CUP OF SORROW.

Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.—MATT. xx. 23.

How much of the world's history is illustrated by that brief scene, when an ambitious mother undertook to push the fortunes of her two sons by what has always been the favorite political method! There, in miniature, was the mingled tragedy and comedy of our race. The Master, being already under the shadow of the cross and feeling himself in the grip of that resistless current which swiftly bore him to his doom, was approached by these three, as if he were soon to have crowns and thrones at his disposal. Nothing of his vision of terror and defeat did they behold, though more than once they had been warned to prepare for dark days to come. And in this they were far from being the most stupid of men; for, when great hopes have been aroused, human nature is apt to discredit persistently every caution that its hope may have told it a too flattering tale. These men had unbounded confidence in their Master as the promised Messiah, and they had fixed ideas as to what the Messiah was to be and to do. There might be troubles to pass through; but how could they doubt that there was also a great triumph close at hand! In that triumph they desired to have a foremost place, and they were not ashamed to ask for it. No scruple about "letting the office seek the man" disturbed their minds. And the woman in the case! What a touch that adds! Even there that sex was displaying its gen-

ius for the rôle of "ruling power behind the throne." Through a woman's voice came the inopportune demand, "Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom!"

With what amazement, seeing what he saw before him, Jesus must have listened to this request! Crowns and thrones! what foolish dreams!—with that black shadow of the hateful cross lying close across their way! "Ye know not what ye ask," he said. "Can ye drink of my cup, and undergo that fiery baptism which I must pass through?" And with the cheerful courage of ignorance they answered at once, "We can." Perhaps never was that answer given with less understanding of what it really meant; and yet nothing could be more characteristic of humanity at large than this readiness to engage itself for undertakings which one has not in the least measured or comprehended. Life seems to be always demanding of us, Can you do this or that? and we, knowing little or nothing of what the pledge involves, are, for the most part, ready enough with our profession of ability.

But he who knew so perfectly both the littleness and the greatness of the human heart had no serious reproof to administer to these somewhat misguided disciples. The others, when they heard of the incident, were moved with indignation. Perhaps some of them were hoping for the same distinction which these two had sought to secure in advance. The Master, however, displayed no anger. He dismissed them with the simple comment that they should indeed drink of that cup and be baptized with his baptism, though, as for sitting on any throne with him in coming time, that must be as God should determine.

Now the amazing fact is that this prophecy of his was fulfilled. They, even they, did drink of that cup which

it cost him such a struggle to put to his lips. Weak, ignorant, foolish men as they were, they did undergo a trial as if by fire; and they won thereby a triumph much more glorious than any they had dreamed of, when they were to sit and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. They had stood upon the brink of all these things like boisterous school-boys, looking forward to the great drama of life, into which they were about to plunge, with totally inadequate perceptions of the trials and the opportunities awaiting them, but, wonderfully enough, when the bitter cup came to be put to their lips, they also drank; and, somehow, through that draught of sorrow, they, too, were transformed into heroes and martyrs. The tradition of the Church, in close accord with the probabilities of the case, which there is no good reason to question, says that, save only Judas, every one of Christ's immediate followers, like himself, suffered a violent death for the sake of the gospel, and won a crown of martyrdom. All of them were called to share his suffering, and only one failed when it came to that awful test. They were just plain, common men, and they could not see, or even be told so that they would understand, into what they were being led. Yet of the whole band but one flinched from the ordeal to which they were subjected; and he, poor man, instead of avoiding his Master's cross, prepared for himself a worse fate, which he was not able to endure. "Ye shall drink of my cup!" So, indeed, they all did.

When one considers the real facts of life, how foolish are those theories of a vicarious atonement which have represented Christ as the one sufferer of the ages, bearing the whole woe of mankind! The truth is that he walked life's common way, to show us its meaning and its end.

The creeds of the Church have missed the whole point and spirit of his mission, when they have taught men to think of him as taking upon himself a death of shame and agony, that others might be free from pain. Paul's phrase is here the illuminating word: "If we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Life says to every one of us: You, too, must drink of this cup. Sooner or later, more or less full to the brim, it comes to all, and there is no escape. It is only a question in what spirit we shall quaff the cup of sorrow, and what effect the bitter potion shall produce in our spiritual being.

But why, then, is this necessity laid upon us? Instinctively, we regard pain as a hateful and evil thing. We use every known device to escape from it, and our hearts are sometimes filled, not only with pity, but with indignation, that others should have so much of it to bear. One of the perplexities of mankind has always been to account for the immense sum of pain mingled in the lot of both animals and men. People have tried to think that it was the just punishment of wickedness, and that, therefore, its presence was no impeachment of the rule of a righteous Deity. But the trouble with this view is that so many who are innocent have to suffer, while the guilty do not, by any means, experience pain in proportion to the wrong they have done. Much has been said at times of the refining influences of sorrow; but, then, testimony has been offered that it often produces a brutalizing effect. Probably it works both ways. Some natures it softens and some it hardens and imbibers. But even if its fruit, in human life, were always sympathy and kindness, what should we say of the pain of dumb beasts who are not supposed to enter into the discipline prepared for men?

I think, in order to find light upon this problem, we must get a deeper and a broader view. Let us take our position at one of the central affirmations of Christian faith,—that the purpose for which God made the world was to bring forth from it the spiritual nature of man, out of which to rear a race of immortal beings. If this be not the end and aim of creation, then it has no end and aim of which the least hint has been disclosed to us. Religion, therefore, believing existence to be a reasonable thing, dares to say that for this purpose the world was made, and that the higher life of our souls is the precious treasure toward which all preceding ages have toiled.

Now, if we remember that the growth of the better spirit in man involves the transference of life from a basis of extreme and unmitigated selfishness to the wholly different basis of self-forgetfulness and love, we may find a hint of the spiritual significance of the great and world-wide fact of sorrow. For, in its earlier manifestations, life knows but one law, which is that of self-preservation. Every living thing seeks its own good in entire disregard of the well-being of every other living thing. The trees of the forest, in their struggle for soil and sunlight, are absolutely without mercy upon each other. The beasts of the field in their hunger-pinch show never the least remorse for their destruction of other forms of life. And man begins his career on this same level of supreme and exclusive interest in the satisfaction of his own desires. He, too, starts as an utterly selfish being, reckless of the happiness, the welfare, it may be the very life, of all who stand between him and the gratification of his whims.

Conceive, then, that over an existence like this there is an ideal realm where self is not the first, but the last object of conscious consideration; where the great and crowning

glory is not to subdue and make subject one's enemy, but to give one's life a ransom for that same enemy's sake; where not fear, but love, is the ruling power that all obey; and where the supreme delight of existence is in that service which love freely renders!

Ask yourself how that life now dominated by selfishness is ever to reach up to this higher realm or is ever to climb to heights so far above it? By what means and under what discipline shall it, by degrees, put off that lower nature, and put on the higher likeness of this spiritual ideal? I think you will not muse long upon that theme without discovering that, in such a transformation, suffering must needs play a great and important part. The spiritual man is of necessity a social being. That is to say, he expresses himself through humane and gentle and loving relations with others of his kind. His whole perfection lies in his affection toward God and his bearing toward his neighbor. Spiritual life really begins with the sense of some common bond between one's own and another life; and, if we reflect what the selfish nature essentially is, it becomes plain enough that one of the most effective means for awakening a feeling of community of interest is the sense of a community of pain.

What is it in the animal world that drives the peaceful, grazing herds together into something like the rude beginnings of a society? It is the lion or the tiger lying in wait for every straggling member of that band. And that is the hint of something which runs all through the long process of development. Men, like animals, are first brought together through their consciousness of a common danger or a common woe. Not only so, but there is a strength and sanctity in this bond which few other human ties possess. They who have stood together

through the storm of battle, enduring side by side the deadly peril of that fearful hour, are ever after comrades and brethren in some peculiar sense. If once you have been with some other engulfed in the deep waters of a common sorrow, you must realize how this has placed you heart to heart with that other soul, as you had never stood before, and in such a way that the memory of it never entirely fades from your mind. Let some great calamity occur, an earthquake or a conflagration, and see how humanity everywhere pours out its gifts without stint to provide relief. It often becomes a very frenzy of giving: a whole populace grows hysterical in its generosity. But these very excesses of emotion emphasize the point I desire to make,—that the higher spiritual and social life of our kind is called into being as men are made to suffer together.

Pain is the hammer that breaks those shackles of selfishness in which the sense-bound life still lies. Pain is the flaming sword which drives the soul forth from its sensuous Eden, where it knows not good or evil, and forces it to begin a quest for some new spiritual habitation. No doubt instances can be found in which it apparently fails to work to this end. Sometimes people who have much suffering to endure are made thereby more selfish and querulous and domineering in their ways. But of what else may it not be said that it is here a savor of life unto life and there of death unto death?

Meanwhile common experience surely bears out the assertion that the pain we have shared constitutes one of life's greatest sacraments. And, if we look closely enough, we shall probably find that suffering which appears to be wasted does not go altogether unutilized. In the first instance, he who has the suffering to bear

may seem to get no spiritual good from it. But will you not generally find some patient friend dancing attendance upon this sick man's whims, playing the part of a ministering angel, and getting from the whole experience a heavenly discipline, which radiates far and wide a circle of heavenly light? There is much reason to say that all of it counts somewhere and somehow toward the enlargement of man's spiritual estate; that even far down, in the animal world beneath us, the foundations of our own higher life have been laid in the pain which these inferior orders of existence have passed through, and that still it must be, as Saint Paul called it, a "groaning and travailing creation," out of which comes a manifestation of the sons of God.

This is why it is said that we must all drink of that cup. It is not only that pain purges and purifies the heart to which it immediately comes, though something of that, no doubt, deserves to be reckoned into the account. But, more than this, it is that, again and again, our very entrance to the higher life is through some common suffering. As it is our own pain that puts out hands for help and fellowship and support, so it is our sympathy for the distress we witness which brings us close to other lives, and permits us to enter the closed chambers of their sorrow as a friend. Even when our hearts bleed within us, say for the anguish of a little child whose sickness we know not how to cure, what a divine thing it is that we can take this child in our arms, to comfort it a little with our love! No babe has lived in vain or suffered in vain, if it has opened in some other soul the blessed founts from which such pity flows.

These thoughts are full of suggestiveness with regard to phrases which are scattered all through the earliest

documents of our Christian faith, and they seem to interpret a great deal of the meaning of Christian history. There is something rather ghastly in those images of a crucified Saviour which, in Catholic countries, one finds hanging over so many a wayside shrine. And yet can we not understand that this figure may there have an appeal to the common heart which no other aspect of the divine life would produce! What is so vivid to that heart as its own bitterness and pain? What can so much commend to it the pattern life of the son of God as the thought, "He, too, suffered, like me, and for my sake he died upon the cross"! This is perhaps the very door, and the only possible door, through which millions of human beings have come into such spiritual contact with him that they could begin to feel the supremacy of his spirit.

Much of the thought of the great apostle Paul is clothed in the language of rabbinical tradition, which has little meaning for us, yet through that formal dress we can discern a body of belief not unlike what has here been sketched. When he speaks of the "fellowship of Christ's sufferings," of being made conformable to his death, of dying with him to a life of sin and rising with him to a life of righteousness, he betrays his constant feeling that the pain of the world is for a great purpose in the providence of God, and that through the love of Christ which rises above it all we have the real clew to its meaning. He did not think of your suffering or mine as an insignificant affair, and that only the pain of him who once hung upon the cross was truly efficacious toward a divine end. But in the cross of Christ he had caught a glimpse of what the whole world's sorrow truly signifies. He had seen, as it were, where this dark road comes out on the shining mountain tops of the land of the spirit,

and knew for what purpose man was made to traverse its shadow and its gloom.

"Without shedding of blood," it used to be said, "there can be no remission of sin"; and in the mouth of sacerdotalism the saying may become stupid and blind. But that it did not have an altogether blind origin should be evident if we so translate it as to make it read that without pain there is no deliverance out of the bonds of that selfishness which, from the spirit's point of view, is the mother of all sin. The whole pilgrimage of the soul is an attempt to get away from that realm of self, where fears abound and where greed is king, in order to find that other realm of love, where faith and hope are supreme and there is no longer any power to molest or make it afraid. In the nature of the case that is a pilgrimage which involves much pain. No soul can take that road alone. Together as a band of brothers we must seek and find our city in the sky; and it sometimes needs the fires of an awful agony to fuse our selfish hearts together. When we have suffered together, then we begin to know the spirit that makes us one.

For none of us is life altogether easy, and for many it is extremely hard. Just now there seems to be a great rebellion against this fact. The world ought not to be so hard, people think. Somehow the common lot must be made ever so much easier and brighter than now it stands! Surely, we can put our hand to no diviner task than that of easing life's burden and lightening its woe! But, when we have done everything that can be done to this end, it will remain, I apprehend, a hard world still. Its sorrow is too vital a part of its discipline to be obliterated. Meantime, when we pity the hardships of the poor, let us not forget that out of poverty come some of the sweetest and best things that earth affords, and that ease and luxury

have been, as a rule, far more difficult for mankind to bear.

After all, the cross is our best symbol of redemption. Our hardships are our best schoolmasters to bring us to understanding of the way of life. To endure hardness is perhaps the best mark of a good soldier of Jesus Christ. When, on the last night of his life, the Master gave the cup to his disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it! This cup is the New Testament in my blood," he meant to hallow for them all the way of suffering, where he went before. He desired that they, too, might walk in it, not without feeling of a sacred and a solemn joy. By his death he has filled with beauteous light the darkest and gloomiest chambers of our human experience. The light of faith, the light of reason, and the light of victory have been taken by him through the deepest of earth's shadowed ways; and none of us need walk therein without this great lamp for our feet.

IMMORTALITY.

If a man die, shall he live again?—JOB xiv. 14.

I hold this to be, on the whole, the greatest question which the human mind has ever asked. No other thought, I say it advisedly and I will make no exception,—no other thought is greater than the thought of the endless existence of the soul; and upon that thought, more than upon any other, the weal or woe, the glory or the shame of our race will ultimately turn. Remarks are sometimes made not entirely in compliment of those who attend church on Easter Day, and on no other day in the year seek the portals of a house of prayer. But I am disposed to attribute the throng of church-goers at Easter, in part at least, to the fact that on this day people are likely to hear something about a theme that interests them as does no other; a theme which they somehow feel to be more vital than any other of which a sermon can treat, and concerning which they are eager to get any crumb of mental or spiritual food that may be offered them. I say that Job's question of old, "If a man die, shall he live again?" whatever Job himself thought about it, was then, and is now, the greatest question that can be asked. Probably none of us would dispute this assertion unless it were in the interest of theistic belief. Some might think that the question, whether or not there is a God above us, ought to take precedence of the question whether or not there is a future life before us.

The two questions, indeed, never can be entirely separated, and they go so much side by side that only as a matter of theory can we be called upon to say which should go first. But if they could be kept apart for any great length of time; if ever it could become a practical question whether it were better to give up belief in God and keep belief in immortality, or to give up hope of the immortal life and keep faith in God, and this were represented to be a final choice, I should myself pronounce unhesitatingly for the idea of endless life. In point of fact though the two ideas may not always have equal strength in the mind, yet each supports, and must in time create the other also. Believers in God may for a season partly, or perhaps entirely, lose their faith in a future life. But let that line of theistic thought be continued and sooner or later faith in immortality will be evolved out of it. Or believers in the unseen world of spirits may not find the thought of God very real to their hearts; but it was out of such belief as they now have, I am sure, that the belief in God originally came; and he who is convinced that the souls of his loved ones still live in a spiritual world will grow at last into the conviction that this other world is governed by an infinite personality.

Happily, then, we are not required to say whether it is more important to believe in God or to believe in immortality. But inasmuch as some modern minds have made rather a virtue of holding to the faith in a divine being, though they have very much given up the expectation of a future life, I wish to assert exactly the contrary estimate; that on the whole mankind could better afford to lose its belief in God than to give up its hope of the immortal life. They who do not agree with this estimate

are much given to asserting the capacity of our great moral impulses and ideals to stand by their own might, and to pointing out the folly and weakness of those who will only be good, as they say, for the hire and lure of an immortal blessedness set before them. Is it not better, they ask, to be true than false, better to be brave than cowardly, better to be pure than unclean, even though all things should end with death? And what is to be said of the moral state of those who imply that, but for the thought of rewards and punishments to come hereafter, they would turn now to low pursuits and merely sensual delights? But this is not a fair statement of the case. It misrepresents the reason for which our race so much clings to its immortal hope, and totally fails to appreciate what that hope has done for mankind. The point is, not that the mind which is morally weak requires to be threatened with future punishment, or bolstered up with the promise of future rewards before it will be steadfast in the path of virtue. It is not that man must have his selfish desire for continuance of life somehow gratified or he will turn traitor to his neighbors and his friends. The point is that man, as a rational being, is not likely to live long to any very high or noble purpose otherwise than in what wears to him the appearance of a rational universe.

That is the practical or pragmatic worth of the idea of immortality. It is the only thought which enables us in the large way to make sense of the world in which we live. What is it all for? What is the good of it all unless its gains and fruits are thus to be gathered up in a new life elsewhere? A friend of mine, a Christian minister, as honest and fearless a soul I think as I have ever known, who died a few months since, said to me only a few

weeks before the end came, that very often doubts about the reality of the life to come assailed him; but the thought which put these doubts to flight was the query, What otherwise is the good of it all? When we talk about the truth of things we appeal to the reason within us for its verdict upon existence as we see it. If we are not going to trust that verdict, at least in some partial way, what is the use of asking for it? And if we do ask for it, it tells us that there is no discernible purpose for which the world was created unless the stream of human life is to go forward into another state of being.

That necessity for thinking that it is a reasonable world, and has a reasonable end is vital to us all. What should we do, such as we are; what scope could we find for our powers, and what incentive to use them in a world that was to us only as a bigger kind of mad-house? Man is a rational being and can only be at home in a rational world. Such I conceive to be the reason why belief in immortality is one of the great moral ideas of our race, on which our whole higher life is built. Indeed it is so nearly the corner-stone of that great edifice that I, for one, would keep it though all other foundations were torn away; for I think whatever else might be destroyed our higher life would build itself anew out of this single thought.

And what a travesty it is of our interest in this belief to represent it as springing from a mere selfish desire for future blessings, or a selfish fear of possible future torment! We have spoken of it as being essential to a rational view of existence. Add to that the hold which it has upon two of the noblest passions of the human soul; that is to say its love and its boundless desire for knowledge. Does any one want to live for the privilege of playing on

mythical harps, or sitting on mythical seats of gold? No; but there is nothing ignoble or selfish in the feeling that those ties of love which bind us together are worthy of endless preservation; and if there be anything sublime in this being of ours it is our hunger for knowledge; for knowledge which in the nature of the case can never come to us here. Put together the demand of our rational faculties for at least some suggestion of an answer to their questioning as to the meaning of existence; the demand of our affections for continuance of the most sacred and the most ennobling quality of life we know; the demand of our intelligence for opportunity to solve the mysteries into whose secret places we can now find no entrance,—and I submit that the hope which answers these demands is not a negligible factor of our higher life.

It may be said that the practical usefulness of the idea of immortality, however plain that may be, does not establish its truth. We may settle it with ourselves that we have every interest to believe in the future life if we can; but this may not mean that we are able to believe. I have not, however, put forward this estimate of the belief, as being intimately connected with the growth and welfare of our better nature, as if that were wholly conclusive. But it seems to me that when people realize the worth of the belief they can find the means of satisfying themselves that the hope is true.

Perhaps we are all more or less troubled by the fact that so many people at the present day either take little interest in it, or say they can find nothing on which to base a steady and confident faith. This is a trouble to us of course. We are so made that where doubt is everywhere in the air it somewhat shakes our certainty. But with regard to people who do not much care what there

is beyond this present life, or whether there be anything there, I must think that they gravely misjudge the situation in which we are here placed. For the reasons already stated, it appears to me a question of thrilling moment and thrilling interest, whether or not we live again when we have done with earth. The incertitude of people who feel no incentive to try to answer that question does not affect my mind; since it is plain to me that they do not adequately feel what is at stake upon it; and that they have never looked into the matter deep enough to give their opinion weight one way or the other.

As for people who have tried to believe and want to believe but cannot, I judge that very often they are scared by what is in effect a baseless shadow of the mind, from which they ought to be able to find deliverance. I know no more pitiable impotence into which the human reason can fall than to be so frightened of its own wants and desires that it dare not affirm what they wish to have affirmed lest it may be self-deceived. A considerable part of the thinking mind of our time appears to have determined (unreasonably as I think) that men in the past have believed against evidence and against experience, simply because they wanted to believe. It has further said to itself that, at whatever cost to what we held most dear, it would never allow its own self-interest to persuade it of the truth of doctrines which had little except this instinctive want to show for themselves.

Now I can honor the honesty of purpose and the passion for truth which lie back of this decision. But I cannot much admire the reason which does not trust itself to decide what is and what is not an unfair mental bias arising from the feelings of the heart; and which remains forever undecided because it is so much afraid

of its own deeper impulses and desires. This seems to me something not much better than a superstition of the educated mind. These deeper feelings have a right to be heard. They make part of the whole intelligence within us. And if reason is so poor a thing that it is to be driven from its judicial function by the mere presence of these clamorous suitors at its bar, and will attempt no decision till they are put wholly out of court, then I submit that reason is rather less worthy to be trusted than these more primal instincts and impulses of our being.

For another thing these uncertain people are generally found demanding, in this case, a kind of mental certitude which is nowhere else vouchsafed to us on any question which lies shrouded in the mists of the future. We do not anywhere know what a day or an hour may bring forth. Knowledge in the sense of unclouded certainty is not possible to us about anything that lies before us. But we have many hopes about the future which for practical purposes are as good as knowledge; hopes which being soberly formed and tenaciously held are abundantly justified by the subsequent course of events. That view of human life which represents it as a process of disillusionment, a course of education in which we gradually find that our hopes have been cheating us, I should utterly repudiate and condemn. It is a morbid, unwholesome, and untrue view of the general life of our kind. Life is in all ways richer than our ignorant fancies can paint it. Its triumphs are greater than men have dared to dream. Its hopes are not fallacious but only ignorant. They do not often deceive us, save that in their own clear air they frequently make that seem near which is really far away.

Especially we may say of a hope like this which springs

out of the soil of human life everywhere, and has been held for so many centuries under critical examination and debate, that it is not to be disposed of as an unreliable and irresponsible fancy of the mind. What I wish to say is that doubts of one of the greatest hopes of the universal mind because it has no unanswerable proof to allege for itself, are not doubts by which any believing heart need be much disturbed. People who wait to be convinced against their will may wait a long time yet; and people who think reason is not to be trusted in presence of a desire to believe may remain altogether uncertain, but they should not be allowed to weaken the hopefulness of those who take a more common sense view.

A man, who was himself in great trouble and grief at the time, once said to me that there was not a shred of evidence on which to base a faith in the future life of the soul. Now that statement was simply absurd. If he had said no absolute proof, no demonstration that can be counted upon to overthrow the doubts of all sceptical minds, that would be a fair statement of the existing situation. But no evidence? Why, the world is full of it and always has been full of it. It may not be evidence that can convince everybody; and it may need a great deal of sifting before anybody has a right to be convinced by it. But it is evidence none the less; and evidence that no intelligent person need affect to despise, however unconvinced by it he may be.

There is the case in reason which makes the hope needful to a reasonable understanding and interpretation of our life. There is the great historic event which this day celebrates, which is told by different witnesses in different ways so that we cannot be sure of the details of what took place, but the important part of which,—that Jesus did

somehow manifest himself to his disciples after his death on the cross--remains not only a credible but an almost inevitable certainty as a condition of the growth and spread of the Christian faith. There are beside this experiences that have come to a multitude of minds, more or less like what befell Saint Paul on his road to Damascus; experiences so strong, so unexpected, and so cogent, that it seems the height of credulity not to accept them as having some validity, but to attribute them only to the action of a heated imagination. I say unhesitatingly that he who can confront the mass of testimony given by those who have seemed to themselves to be in direct contact with an unseen world; such testimony, for example, as the great sage Swedenborg supplies to us, and is abundantly echoed and re-echoed to us from many different sides; he who can survey all this and be untouched by it, as if it established no kind of probability on which his heart could rest, does not possess what I should call an open mind.

Of late years it has been somewhat fashionable to disbelieve, and I fear that fashion has gone farther than one might think. But if we set aside all such whims of the moment there is, I apprehend, no least shadow of a doubt but that this hope will stand unshaken in the common mind. It is not the doubters who are going to convince the world that it has no reason for the faith it has cherished. It is the world which is going to convince the doubters that they have been hasty in many of their conclusions, and that its own foolishness, if so it may appear, has more of the wisdom of God in it than much of their labored science.

One of our great difficulties at the present day is the failure of imagination to answer our need. We can

agree that the soul ought to live forever. We can be at least half convinced by some bit of evidence that it does continue to exist after the destruction of the tabernacle in the flesh. But where does it abide? What manner of life can it adopt outside of bodily conditions? What can existence be good for lacking those sights and scenes with which we are here familiar? On the whole, some rather pale and uninteresting shadow of our present life seems to be about all that the average imagination can compass.

One suggestion I should like to offer, which may be a hint that the other life need not lack for interest or for employment. If we look back to see what are the high places in our memory, the mountain peaks of experience so to speak, which lift themselves most clearly into the field of our remembrance, I am sure that we shall find many of them to be the recollection of rare moments of personal intercourse with others of our kind. There have been times when we have met others heart to heart; when all the faculties of our being have been kindled and awakened to the utmost through conversation on themes of mutual interest; when sympathy, admiration and affection have arisen to a wondrous flame in our own minds, as we have felt that we were looking deep into another soul. Is there any other joy of living that is greater than this? Does experience bring us anything better than this loving, intelligent, and conscious communion of spirits, into which we are now sometimes privileged to enter?

Contrast with that the callous indifference that we feel toward the men and women whom we encounter as we pass along the street. These people are less to us than are the trees of a forest when we walk through its se-

cluded paths; of less interest than the walls, and shrubs, and buildings beside the road as we take a country drive. We pay less attention to them, as we dodge about in the throng of a crowded sidewalk, than we would pay to the boulders of a mountain stream along which we were picking our way. This is because we see only the outside of these people, and barely that unless we chance to be interested in their dress. They are really as indifferent to us as so many insects; and if we think of them at all it is apt to be only as obstacles to be avoided, with some feeling of annoyance that they will so persistently get in our way.

And yet, every one of these people carries within him an interesting and fascinating world of his own. The stream of his thoughts, and memories, and hopes, if we could watch its flow, would be far more absorbing than any moving picture prepared for our amusement. What tragedies, what romances, what triumphs are all the time being transacted in the inner chambers of these beings whom we glance at along our way with less curiosity than as if they were so many pebbles in a brook.

Now suppose that we were gifted with sympathetic insight to behold the working of that interior life which floods all the mental habitations of these human beings! How then might we move among them? Why, it would be as we now wander among banks and gardens of choice flowers; our eye delighted at every turn with new and unexpected beauties of color and of form. There is nothing else in all the world; no wonder of nature in mountain, sea, or sky; no stupendous waterfall, or river cataract, or majestic dome of ice or snow; no vision even of the starry heavens at night, that is so interesting and satisfying to us as our close touch with another human

soul, when the communion of friendship is at its highest and best.

Imagine a world, then, in which all the great treasures that lie in other human hearts were unlocked to our inspection; where the rare moments of what has seemed an adequate contact with our closest kindred and friends might be broadened into something like a steady stream of experience; where those crumbs of the richest mental viands we have ever tasted should grow to a continual feast; and I think our imagination need strain no further to realize how heaven can furnish us employment and delight.

Even without this hint, might we not take it for granted that, if we live at all after we have done with earth, we shall find existence good to our taste and opening out into infinite possibilities? That we are to live in another world, and under other conditions, many hints both of hope and of warning are given us. This is not the day, if there were now time, to set forth the risk which such a prospect opens before us; the risk of entering that other world inadequately prepared for what it offers to us; and perhaps having to make up by most painful effort for failure to use our opportunities here. What shames and separations may thus fall upon us, it is not pleasant to contemplate.

But this is a day of hope. "I shall not die, but live," is its message. Whether or not we are to partake of them at once, there are pleasures springing up at the right hand of God for evermore which we may aspire to share; and there is a path stretching away into the cloud-land of infinite being which we may hope to tread. Of one thing we may feel sure: that there are those awaiting us who will do all they can to smooth the way and lead us

into light. It is not only that Almighty power and wisdom have made for us an opening through death to life, or that one greater than all others of human kind has gone before us treading this last enemy under foot. It is that those near and dear to us hold out welcoming hands. Perhaps even, we may find occasion to recall that ancient prophecy "a little child shall lead them." At all events, we shall not lack for faces that we know to attend us, and the way shall be made easy by the ministration of many loving hands.

THE STORY OF KING'S CHAPEL

In the month of May in the year 1686, Rev. Robert Ratcliffe, a clergyman of the Church of England, coming from London landed in the town of Boston. His business here was to establish a church of the Episcopal order, one whose ministers should preserve the Apostolic succession, and which should use the Book of Common Prayer as sanctioned and legalized by English law. No church of that kind had yet been attempted within the limits of the Colony. Farther north, in what are now New Hampshire and Maine, several such churches had been planted and had maintained a more or less precarious existence. But no one had been venturesome enough to subject an undertaking of that sort to the rigorous Puritan climate of Massachusetts Bay.

No doubt in England the moment was considered to be propitious and opportune for this enterprise. The Commonwealth period there had come to an end, and the Stuart dynasty was once more firmly seated upon the English throne. The Charter of the Colony had been annulled, by decree of Chancery, and Joseph Dudley had been appointed by the Crown, President of all New England,—in effect the first royal governor. Probably something like the extermination of what we now call Congregationalism was aimed at by the Court party, and Mr. Ratcliffe was not sent here on an entirely peaceful errand. However that may be, he did not come into a very peaceful atmosphere: for the public opinion of Boston could scarcely have regarded him with less favor if he had brought a commission signed by the only potentate (under

heaven) of whom the citizens of the town then stood in much awe, His Satanic Majesty the prince of evil spirits.

Boston people hated and dreaded everything savoring of episcopacy, both on religious and on political grounds. As they looked at the matter, the Church of England had only in part divested itself of what they were pleased to call the "rags of popery." To them it was still foul and unclean, with many a superstition. Moreover, it was identified in their thought with a civil rule which they had found tyrannous and oppressive in the last degree. They saw the sure overthrow of their hard-won liberty, should its authority be once more established over them. In those days questions of religion and politics were everywhere inextricably mixed, and, as we know that each class of questions by itself may be a prolific generator of heat, we can understand that Mr. Ratcliffe, even if he had something of the salamander in him, found here a torrid atmosphere quite warm enough for his taste. The Puritans may have been rather cold and impassive without, but they had plenty of the fire of passion and prejudice within; and to them the foundation of an Episcopal church in Boston was about as welcome as would be the location of a pest-house in the midst of a thickly settled and prosperous neighborhood of homes.

Though there had been from the first some loyal adherents of that church in the Colony, they were far too few to attempt to hold public worship in accordance with the liturgy to which they were attached. But times were now somewhat changed here as well as in the motherland. The Puritan spirit was neither broken nor overawed, but it must have been a little dismayed by the turn which events had taken, and the signs were therefore more auspicious than common for the work which Mr. Ratcliffe had in hand. On his arrival an attempt was made to secure one of the meeting-houses of the town for his use, but this attempt altogether failed. There were three of these churches then in existence, all flourishing and strong,—the First, the Second, and the Third, this latter what we now know as the Old South. None of them would have the Church of England service

read within their doors, and no terms could be made with any of them for joint occupancy during a limited period.

As no church building was to be had, use of the rooms in the Town-house was placed at his disposal. This was the building which then occupied the site where the State House now stands, and here the library of the Church of England was for the first time publicly kept in Boston. It is not to be inferred that the company intended the service for the congregation exclusively, but were evidently more or less anxious to have it held, for the sake of the public, in the following month they proposed to have a general organization. The 25th of June they met together, and King's Chapel, or in the words of the original charter, "the church of our Saviour" was then and there "erected and formed and officers were chosen, who were to be successors hereinafter to be chosen in like manner." Though there was at first a difficulty in finding a church to be used, called in at first, it was soon resolved, however, to use the Town-house, which was then the only building in Boston. Town-houses were sooningularly large, and spacious, and spacious chamber was large enough to afford space for the holding of a house of worship, and funds for the building of a house of worship.

In December of that same year, John Andrus, the first fully consecrated minister of the Province, and he was an excellent man, came to the table of the Corporation, and in the course of the question of the new church had it in his mind to bring up a part of the history of the town. Andrus knew he began to be anxious to have his history sent for the first time, and made a demand upon them for the same. These ministers were soon in service. These ministers were John Moody of the First Church, Increase of the Second Church, and Samuel

the church were walking up and down in the street, probably in a not extremely prayerful frame of mind. After a while Andros relented and put the liturgical service at such an hour that the rightful owners of the church could have it before noon. The joint occupancy then appears to have settled down into a state of armed truce.

Meanwhile, steps were being taken to provide money for the building of a new church; but they could buy no land on which to place it. No friend of the new enterprise, it seems, owned any land so situated as to make a suitable site; and none of the Congregationalists would sell a foot of land for this purpose at any price. Here again Gov. Andros was the good angel of the undertaking. Through his influence, or under his direction, when there was money enough to begin a church, the Council set apart a corner of the burying-ground as a place where it might be erected. That is where the foundation was laid in the autumn of 1688, and that is where King's Chapel has been ever since. Public service was first held in the wooden church erected on this spot June 30, 1689, when the society had just passed its third birthday. That church somewhat resembled the present edifice, though it was much smaller. The pews were of the same fashion, but surmounted by a railing with curtains attached, which made the divisions between the pews some inches higher. The pulpit and the communion table were taken over from this church when, fifty years later, a second building was erected; and we may therefore claim, I think, that our pulpit is older than any other in the country which has continued to be in constant use.

By the time the new church was finished the short reign of Andros had come to rather an inglorious end. The people rose against him during the revolution that placed the Prince of Orange on the throne, and their sometime tyrant had to endure a long term of confinement in the prison on Fort Hill. King's Chapel for the time being went under a cloud. Probably because of his very unpopular association with the Andros régime,

the first minister, Mr. Ratcliffe, gave up and returned to England. The new governor, Sir William Phipps, was decidedly of the Congregational way of thinking, and it was like extracting sunshine from cucumbers for the Episcopalians to hope for light from the favor of his smile. It was a time for royalists to take in their banners and hide their diminished heads. Popular disfavor became exceedingly evident and active. The ministers of the town thundered against the liturgy, and called its adherents "popish dogs and rogues." The windows of the Chapel were repeatedly stoned and broken. It is rather a wonder that the building and the organization came safely through the storm.

At this juncture the church owed much to a young man who came to be its first real minister, and who continued for thirty-nine years in that office. This was Samuel Myles, a native of New England, whose father was a Baptist minister farther south in the Old Colony, where Baptist ministers had a right to live, as they did not in those days in and about Boston. Young Myles was a graduate of Harvard of the Class of 1684. He taught school in Charlestown, and probably he was there when the services of the Church of England were first held in the Boston Town-house. At all events he fell somehow under Mr. Ratcliffe's influence and was converted to the Church of England way of thinking. In 1689, when Mr. Ratcliffe, after a three years' residence here, went home, young Mr. Myles was given the King's Chapel pulpit. He was not then ordained, but continued to officiate as lay reader till four years afterward, when he went to England. There he spent four years more—partly in study, for he brought home an M.A. degree from Oxford, and partly in soliciting help for his struggling flock across the ocean.

In this latter aim he was quite successful, for he much enlisted the sympathy of the King and Queen, who gave him substantial tokens of their interest. He came back bringing a royal grant of a hundred pounds a year, and well laden with furnishings for the Chapel,—books and cushions and carpets and altar cloths in goodly store.

Even greater gifts from William and Mary soon followed him across the sea. First came a very handsome set of communion silver. This continued in use till another royal patron proved still more munificent, when this first silver was in part distributed among other neighboring churches. A handsome flagon and cup were given to Christ Church in Cambridge, where they may still be seen, duly inscribed as a gift from William and Mary "To their Majesties' Chapel in New England."

The other gift from royal bounty at this time was a quite large theological library. Bringing theological literature to Boston must have been a good deal like carrying coals to Newcastle. There is no evidence that the library contributed anything to the settlement of existing problems and controversies, for such of these books as now remain do not appear to have been very diligently studied, or even read. During the Revolution this library was more or less scattered and lost. When the Boston Athenæum was established, what remained of it was given into the keeping of that institution. And there these books may still be seen, if any one wishes to see them,—great, splendid folios, a perfect triumph of the printer's art, practically as fresh to-day as when they first came from the press. It appears to be probable that nobody ever read them, and it is now quite certain, I should say, that nobody ever will.

Mr. Myles must have been from the first a somewhat remarkable man. Reformers are apt to have an irritating habit of assuming that they are the only people in the world possessed of moral courage; but if one wants an instance and example of what it is to stand up in the face of popular prejudice and abuse, he will find a very good one in the case of young Samuel Myles, who held to what he thought was right under about as heavy a storm of public vituperation as men are often called to endure.

Under his leadership the church weathered the crisis in its affairs, and held together stoutly waiting for more prosperous days. We cannot here follow its growth, step by step, through the problems and difficulties that

beset its way. By the end of the century the power of the Puritan theocracy was much broken. In the witchcraft delusion of the early nineties the teachings of the more extreme among the clergy had reached a height of folly which began to turn popular favor against them. The government of Phipps was the last to be actively hostile to King's Chapel. When Joseph Dudley came back as royal governor, he undertook to be of both parties, taking a place on the Vestry of the Chapel, but habitually attending church in Roxbury. After Phipps, the officers of the Crown here in Boston were for a long time open partisans and champions of the Church of England service.

The church lived, not without trial and friction, but on the whole with steady increase of its influence. Sunday after Sunday a considerable part of the wealth and fashion of the town gathered within its doors. In outward appearance the congregation must have been somewhat brilliant. The uniforms of British officers contributed a goodly bit of color, and the escutcheons, or coats of arms, of knights and baronets connected with the government were hung upon the pillars of the church. The pulpit, also, was covered with scarlet cloth heavily draped about it. Those who belonged to the royal party made a point of dressing in full court fashion, so that Dr. Myles's congregation, as he looked down upon it, must have presented itself to his eye in quite brave array.

The lame feature of the religious service during these years must have been the music. There was no organ anywhere in this country till Thomas Brattle, a liberal-minded merchant and the treasurer of Harvard College, imported one from England at his own expense. At his death, in 1713, he left this organ by will, first, to the church in Brattle Square, which had recently been built and was decidedly the most liberal of all the Congregational churches, but if that society did not accept the gift within a year, then the organ was to go to King's Chapel. It did not take the Brattle Square people anything like a year to make up their mind. Mr.

Brattle died in May. His brother informed the church by letter of the gift, and in the following July the church voted that, "with respect," they did "not think it proper to use the same in the public worship of God." One of the curious twists into which the Puritan mind had fallen was the notion that there was something peculiarly devilish in instrumental music, though to any lover of music their dismal psalmody must have seemed rather a satanic thing. It was of a piece with their hatred of the flag of England because it had emblazoned on it what they called a "popish cross." So King's Chapel got the organ, which it received very thankfully. There was no one competent to play on it, and they sent to England for an organist. One Edward Enston was engaged to act in that capacity, and his name deserves to be remembered as that of the first real musician who made this country his home. It is on record that the church paid him a salary of thirty pounds, say a hundred and fifty dollars, which was not so bad. This organ was afterward sold to St. Paul's Church in Newburyport, and by that church it was resold to the State Street Chapel in Portsmouth, where it may still be seen. It is now more than two hundred years old.

Throughout the earlier years of the eighteenth century the warfare of sermons and pamphlets went merrily on. Mostly it had to do with the liturgy and with questions of church government,—whether or not bishops were a divine necessity, and as to the legitimacy of any other than an Episcopal ordination. Some of the curates, or king's lecturers, as they were commonly called, who came over from England to assist Dr. Myles had what we now know as pronounced high-church tendencies, and they were quite willing to maintain the controversy on the King's Chapel side.

In 1722 a bomb-shell which made a great deal of noise and produced no small degree of consternation was suddenly exploded in the Congregationalist camp. Rev. Timothy Cutler, rector (or president) of Yale College, had grown up in Charlestown, where he may easily have gone to school to Mr. Myles when he

taught there. He had risen to high position among what was in effect the Established clergy of New England, and as the head of Yale College he stood much in the public eye. When, therefore, he suddenly went over to the Episcopal faith, declared his belief that Presbyterian or Congregational ordination was insufficient, and that no one could be a true minister without Episcopal ordination, it made an astounding sensation. The whole of New England rang with denunciation of such apostasy. Dr. Cutler's name undoubtedly added considerable weight to the cause of the struggling Episcopal churches which by this time were springing up here and there, for the English Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts had sent its agents into this field, and they were busily at work.

A subscription was immediately raised, in part among King's Chapel people, to send Dr. Cutler to England for ordination. Steps had already been taken toward the building of a new Episcopal church at the North End of the city. The corner-stone of this edifice, Christ Church, on Salem Street, now commonly called the Old North, was laid by Dr. Myles of King's Chapel in April, 1723; and Dr. Cutler on his return from England preached his first sermon there in the following December.

In March, 1727, after a long and successful ministry, Dr. Myles died. We are given to understand that the church provided for him a very imposing funeral. It must have been something out of the common, for it is on record that it cost one hundred and ninety pounds and fourteen shillings. Inasmuch as the church voted to offer his successor a salary of one hundred and ten pounds, not so very much more than half what Dr. Myles's funeral cost, and paid his widow for a time the munificent dole of twenty pence weekly, we have some reason, as we look back, to exclaim that the world does move.

There is a foregleam of the independent spirit which the church afterward manifested in the action taken after Dr. Myles's death. Mr. Harris, the King's lecturer, very much wanted to be made the regular minister. But he had been rather a sharp thorn in Dr. Myles's side, and

was at daggers drawn with Dr. Cutler of Christ Church. So the Wardens and Vestry would have none of him. Neither did they wish to put the matter, without reserve, into the hands of the Bishop of London, under whose somewhat shadowy authority they were supposed to live. They therefore voted to leave it to two friends of theirs in London—Gen. Francis Nicholson and Mr. Thomas Sanford. They were to consult with the Bishop and send over a minister. It is worthy of remark, in view of later controversies, that at their first interview the Bishop expressly disclaimed the right of presentation to the vacant pulpit. However, he cheerfully agreed to use his good offices to help find for Dr. Myles a worthy successor. They finally made choice of Rev. Roger Price, a young clergyman who had seen service as chaplain in the West Indies. He came over in 1729, and there was rather an interesting ceremony at his induction into office.

First they all went into the church together. Then the vestrymen and the people withdrew, leaving Mr. Price alone in the church. The new minister then proceeded to lock himself in and to toll the bell. This having been done, he unlocked the door and received the people back, who wished him joy upon his having possession of the church. It was probably an old-world ceremony of the time, and was meant to signify how far they were from congregational ways of thinking.

The year following his arrival Mr. Price was made Bishop's Commissary for these parts, by virtue of which appointment he became a kind of overseer of all the Episcopal churches in New England, there being as yet no American bishop. A third church of that order was being talked of for Boston. King's Chapel had provided more room by adding galleries to its building, and Christ Church was full. But most newcomers to the town were now of the Church of England faith and there was need of further accommodation. April 15, 1734, the building of Trinity Church was begun, Mr. Commissary Price officiating at the laying of the corner-stone. The first rector of Trinity was Addington Davenport, who had been for some years assistant minister at King's Chapel.

The ministry of Mr. Price was not altogether a happy one. He was a preacher of more than usual power, a man moreover of high character and blameless life; but he was an Englishman, and one who never quite succeeded in adjusting himself to the American climate. He had English notions about the prerogatives of his office; and, though King's Chapel adopted the English fashions, it wore them with a difference. Once he was disciplined by the church quite sharply. He had practically decided to throw up his job and go back to England. His arrangements for this indeed were all made, when he suddenly fell violently in love with a young lady of Boston, who was, appropriately enough, the daughter of a Mr. Jonathan Bull. His wooing prospered, and New England was so much improved in his regard that he decided, after all, to remain. But when he wished to recall the letter of resignation that he had already offered, the church had something to say about that. He was not allowed to resume his office till he had signed a paper in which he promised to renounce and give up certain notions that he had held as to his right to direct and govern church affairs. So far as appears he kept his promise, though it is probable that after the honeymoon was over it rankled somewhat in his mind.

During his later years he bought an estate in the town of Hopkinton, where he built a church that has continued to live down to the present day. Through him Sir Harry Frankland, who had come to be Collector of the Port, and who was of the Vestry of King's Chapel, was also led to build a mansion in Hopkinton; and there he lived with Agnes Surriage as his ward till they left the country together. They who remember that romantic story may be interested to know that after Frankland's death Agnes, then Lady Frankland, returned to Boston, where she remained during the siege, and that her name appears as having been assigned a pew in King's Chapel.

Finally in 1746 Mr. Price resigned his office. During a period of more than two and a quarter centuries his letter of resignation stands upon the records of the church as the only one ever offered and accepted. All its other

ministers, save Mr. Ratcliffe, the founder of the church, and Mr. Caner, who deserted his post, have died in office.

A distinguished layman who appeared upon the scene about this time was William Shirley. He had come over in 1734 to engage in the practice of law, and rapidly rose to be one of Boston's foremost citizens. When in 1741 the King had to appoint a new governor, he did what the people of the Commonwealth have done twice within the last twenty years, and took a man from the Vestry of King's Chapel, naming William Shirley for that position. He had been governor five years when Mr. Commissary Price resigned, and his advice had much to do with the choice of a successor to that gentleman. This time the church voted unanimously not to approach the Bishop of London about the business, but to select for themselves a minister from the ranks of the clergy already at work in America. They invited Rev. Henry Caner, who had been twenty-two years in the country, most of the time in the service of the church in Fairfield, Conn. Mr. Caner was inducted into office in 1747, by the same ceremony that Mr. Price had employed.

Immediately upon his settlement the plan for a new church building was vigorously taken up. A subscription was started, headed by Gov. Shirley and Sir Harry Frankland, with Peter Faneuil, the giver of Faneuil Hall, to serve as treasurer. The most vexatious question with which they had to deal was that of securing land on which to place a larger church. Behind the Chapel, at this time, was a somewhat dilapidated schoolhouse occupying a small lot. The proposal of the church was that, in exchange for this, it should convey to the town another larger lot on Bromfield Lane, and on that should erect, at its own expense, a new schoolhouse such as should satisfy the Selectmen. It was not only a fair but a generous proposal. Yet it took three long town meetings to get the requisite votes passed. The whole project met the fiercest opposition. When at last the town voted to accept the church proposal, it was a very narrow majority that prevailed. The vote stood 205 in favor, and 197 against. There can be no doubt that this opposition

sprang from religious prejudice. Even yet, however, their troubles were not over, for they had to build a schoolhouse to the satisfaction of the Selectmen, and these gentlemen, whether in zeal to serve the town, or to provide what thorny path they could for Episcopacy to tread, proved quite exorbitant in their demands. In the end they built a brick schoolhouse a third larger than the old wooden one, at a cost of seventeen hundred pounds. Altogether they paid more than \$22,000 for the small schoolhouse lot.

The way being at last made clear, Mr. Peter Harrison of Newport, R.I., was employed to make a plan. The sole warrant of his fitness for his task was the success of his plan for the construction of the Redwood Library at Newport; but certainly the church could hardly have made a more fortunate choice in the selection of its architect. The corner-stone of the new building was laid by Gov. Shirley, Aug. 11, 1749, and the first service was held there Aug. 21, 1754. During the building of the church the congregation worshipped in Trinity; and it is some evidence of the mitigation of religious prejudice that during this period one of the Congregational churches was very willingly put at the disposal of the King's Chapel people for their Christmas services.

In 1756 a new organ was brought over from England, bearing as ornaments the mitre and crown which are still retained. There is a tradition that this organ was selected by the great musician Handel, who was a friend of the King's, but this is not a matter of authentic history.

In 1768 a Bible was given to the church by Mrs. Elizabeth Rogers, which has lain upon the reading-desk ever since and is still in constant use. In 1772, just on the eve of the Revolution, a large and handsome set of communion silver was received from King George III., and the church passed a vote of thanks to Gov. Hutchinson for his services in procuring the same.

Soon after the completion of the present church, events began to shape rapidly toward the impending storm, though for a time there was little evidence of it upon the surface of affairs. As late as 1763 that good and great patriot James Otis said, "The true interests of Great

Britain and her plantations are mutual, and what God in his Providence has united let no man dare attempt to pull asunder." At that time there could have been no considerable tide of sentiment running in favor of separation. But as matters approached a crisis, the irritation of the colonists becoming ever more acute, and the King's government, with incredible folly, ever more determined to force the issue against them, upon such people as worshipped in King's Chapel the strain was peculiarly hard. Throughout the Episcopal churches of the Colony the feeling, no doubt, was practically unanimous in favor of keeping the bond with the motherland unbroken. They were willing to bear even heavier burdens than the King had put upon them rather than resort to disunion.

Yet the more thoughtful must have seen very soon that the struggle for independence would be made, and many must have heard the voice of duty calling them in that direction, against their natural inclination. If it be thought that much loyalty to the King in these churches verged close upon disloyalty to the cause of American freedom, let it be remembered that Washington, when he took command at Cambridge, at once caused Christ Church, which had been injured by the popular party, to be put in order, and that he worshipped there during the siege, after the manner in which he had been brought up.

When the storm broke, it must have seemed to many churchmen like the crack of doom. Through the days of Lexington and Bunker Hill and the siege following, King's Chapel pursued its way as best it could. It was a time of much distress in Boston, and Dr. Caner busied himself with the collection and administration of a relief fund, of which he served as treasurer. At last came the unhappy morning when he was given only seven hours' notice of the impending evacuation. How could he have been expected under such circumstances to act with much cool deliberation! He was an old man, seventy-seven years of age, and the whole world, as he knew it and believed in it, seemed to be dissolving under his feet. Events that

were taking place could only mean to him the absolute ruin of the country. Moreover, he and people like him stood in some real peril, if they remained to face the victorious army. At least, strong passions had been aroused, and he had some reason to think that these might not be entirely under the control of the leaders of the popular party then triumphant.

Gathering together what he could of his possessions, or so much as he might be allowed to take, Dr. Caner, in company with eighteen other clergymen, some thirty families belonging to his church, and a numerous company of loyalists besides, embarked on one of the ships of the British fleet and set sail for Halifax. He took with him most of the record books of King's Chapel and all the communion silver. What were his motives in this we do not surely know. The silver was the gift of two English sovereigns, and he may have been unwilling to leave it in the hands of rebels. The books he may have thought to preserve as one saves the log of a sinking ship. The books were afterward in the main recovered; of the silver no sure trace has ever been found.

Without a minister, and with nearly half its congregation in exile, the services of the church were for a time suspended. The organization of the society was maintained, but the people attended church at Trinity, whose young minister, Mr. Parker, had decided to stick to his post. Whether for prudential or for sentimental reasons, the building was no longer spoken of as the King's Chapel, but was called merely the Stone Chapel for quite a long time after the Revolution. The mitre and crown disappeared from the organ, and it was not till well along into the next century that they were brought forth from hiding and restored to their rightful place.

The funeral of Gen. Joseph Warren, who was killed at Bunker Hill, was held there April 8, 1776. During the remaining period of the war, the church was offered to and occupied by the congregation of the Old South. Their house of worship had been much maltreated by British officers and was altogether unfit for use. The people of the Old South were domiciled in King's Chapel

for a period of something like five years. And it is to be hoped that the memory of old wrongs committed against them was thereby effectually obliterated.

One more episode, and that the most remarkable of all, remains to be dealt with, in order to round out this sketch of the first century of the life of King's Chapel. In September, 1782, Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, a prominent physician of Boston, and the father of the celebrated architect of our State House, who was then Senior Warden of the Chapel, opened correspondence with a young man then just beginning to preach, with a view to securing his services for the vacant pulpit.

This young man, James Freeman by name, had already passed through a somewhat adventurous career. He was the son of a Cape Cod ship captain who afterward became a merchant in Quebec. Born in Charlestown, he attended the Boston Latin School, and was graduated from Harvard College in the class of 1777. After teaching in Barnstable, he set sail in 1780 for Quebec, to visit his people there; but on his arrival, as the war was still on, he was arrested and thrown into prison. Finally he obtained release and permission to go to New York; but on the passage his ship was captured by an American privateer from Salem, and he was taken to that port, where of course he was set at liberty. Here he began to preach; and, becoming somehow known to the people of King's Chapel, he was invited to officiate there as lay reader, that is, to read the service and to preach on Sunday. This, it may be remembered, was the way in which the long and notable ministry of Samuel Myles also began. Now the whole of Eastern Massachusetts was at that time, as we should say, extremely "liberal" in the matter of religious belief. Young Freeman was of this broader way of thinking and would do much freely in King's Chapel. The church did not object to preaching. Pews left by departing loyalists were not to be sold, and for non-payment of taxes, under the law made and provided for such cases, and gradually removed from other hands. After Mr. Freeman had been preaching for two years and a half, the question of making

some changes in the Prayer Book was agitated, and a large committee was appointed to consider that matter.

It may seem rather strange to us that an Episcopal church should indulge itself in a proceeding of this nature. It is to be remembered, however, that this particular church had always lived in great independence. There had been no bishop here to consult, and English bishops were very far away; so that the church had always been very much a law unto itself. No doubt there was considerable feeling in the American mind at this time that the Revolution had sundered ecclesiastical as well as civil ties with England. Moreover, it transpired presently that there was no small trouble about getting an American bishop out of English sources, and he was finally procured through the somewhat roundabout road of Scotland.

Altogether, it is not so strange that King's Chapel conceived itself at liberty to make such changes as it desired in its book of worship. Other churches, like Trinity, had voted to omit from the reading of its liturgy the prayer for the King; and that was a kind of precedent for the longer step that King's Chapel proposed to take. I cannot find that they were consciously adopting any heretical course, or that they knowingly embarked on a controversial career. They seem to have supposed, at first, quite innocently, that what they were doing every Episcopal church would do presently, as a matter of course. If they had foreseen the storm which their action produced, they would have understood better what a momentous step they were taking. As it was, they were much amazed to find themselves made over into dangerous heretics. After several meetings to consider and discuss the report of the committee which had been appointed, the church finally voted, on the 19th of June, 1785, "that the common prayer as it now stands amended, be adopted by this church, as the form of prayer to be used in future by this church and congregation." The vote was not unanimous, but it was passed by a very large majority.

The purpose of these changes, and the character of them, are admirably stated in the preface of the book as

then printed, and as it may be found in all subsequent editions. The great change, aside from the omission of the Nicene creed, was the alteration or suppression of all phrases in which the dogma of the Trinity was stated. Prayers were no longer addressed to Christ or the Holy Spirit, but to God the Father alone; and the trinitarian doxology was given up in favor of one taken from the writings of St. Paul. How little the church considered that in this it had gone far aside from the beaten way may be judged from the fact that, as soon as the first bishop, Bishop Seabury of Connecticut, was established here, it made immediate application to have its young minister ordained. There is not the slightest reason to question the entire good faith with which this application was made. The church had no thought of separating itself from the rest of the Christian world.

One may conjecture that if Bishop Seabury had not been the son of a Congregational minister he would have ordained Mr. Freeman, and that very probably would have ended the episode. In that case it is most likely that the church would have receded, after a little, from the changes it had made, and would have kept its place in the ranks with other Episcopal churches. But there is no churchmanship quite so stiff as that which is made over out of dissenting material, and the Bishop of Connecticut was not disposed to relax anything in favor of the latitudinarian tendencies of the day. He refused to grant the ordination requested. The church then made application to the bishop-elect of New York, Bishop Provoorst, who was known to be of more moderate views. He received Mr. Freeman very courteously, and expressed approval of the amended King's Chapel liturgy. But with regard to ordination he thought it would be necessary to consult his clergy. After such consultation he made formal reply to the application, that decision would have to be reserved till the meeting of the next General Convention.

But by this time such a tempest of protest and objurgation had come about its ears that the church began to understand and be ready to accept the position of isolation to which its actions had condemned it. It stood absolutely

alone. There was no fellowship to which it could turn for shelter or support. The Episcopalians had cast it out, the Congregationalists would not take it in, and there was no Unitarian denomination with which it could ally itself. Yet nobody drew back, and there was no defection from its ranks as it set forth on its independent career.

The next question was what to do in the absence of Episcopal ordination, and it did not take long to decide upon adoption of the Congregational practice. Here was the church which once welcomed with great joy Dr. Cutler's decision, that he could not be properly ordained unless a bishop's hands were laid upon him, now calmly taking up the Congregational theory and practice, only, as it had no membership in that body, it could not call a church council, after the custom of that branch of the church. What it proceeded to do was to ordain its minister alone, the Wardens solemnly investing him with all the rights belonging to his sacred office as "rector, minister, priest, pastor, public teacher, and teaching elder." Obviously they did not mean that there should be any doubt as to their intention to give him as full ordination as anybody possessed. The terms they used all bear reference to one or another of the controversies of the day. Whatever one may think of the sufficiency of this ordination from an ecclesiastical point of view, its legality has never been questioned in any court of civil law; and the precedent thus established has been followed ever since. At first no other church would participate, and since then no other church has been allowed to take part in the ordination or installation of a King's Chapel minister.

It is perhaps worthy of remark that for quite a long time after the war of independence this church was a musical pioneer in a very dry and thirsty land so far as the springs of melody were concerned. It became quite the fashion to have sacred concerts there. The Handel and Haydn Society, after its organization, repeatedly gave its concerts in King's Chapel. One concert, of which the programme has come down to us, was arranged for the 27th of October, 1789, in honor of Gen. Washington, then first President of the United States. The first thing on

the programme was a congratulatory ode to him. The music was mostly taken from various oratorios, and the concert began at what must seem to us the strange and unseemly hour of eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

With the completion of this sketch of the first hundred years of its life the more picturesque part of the story of King's Chapel comes to an end. Dr. Freeman, though his career began in somewhat stormy fashion, enjoyed a long and honored and peaceful ministry. In 1808 Samuel Cary, a young man of much promise, was settled as his colleague. But he lived less than seven years, dying in 1815, when Dr. Freeman again assumed all the duties of his office. But in 1824 failing health required that he should have assistance, and Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood was called to his aid. Dr. Freeman died in 1835, having been minister of the Chapel for fifty-two years.

Dr. Greenwood then became minister in his place. He was a child of the Chapel, having been baptized by Dr. Freeman in infancy. He was a Harvard graduate of the class of 1814. Unhappily he was not strong physically, and did not live beyond middle life, as he died in 1843. But his work, extending through nineteen years, left its distinct mark upon the church. The Prayer Book shows many a trace of his shaping hand. Dr. James Walker said of him that he was "pure as water from a living spring."

His successor was Rev. Ephraim Peabody, a native of Wilton, N.H., and a graduate of Bowdoin College of the class of 1827. He was installed Jan. 11, 1846, having previously held short pastorates in Cincinnati and New Bedford. He too was a man whose bodily strength was much less than his vigor of mind. He lived but ten years after he came to King's Chapel, and died in November, 1856; but this was long enough to stamp his influence very deeply upon the life of the church. John Weiss said of him, "A more sweet and sanctified spirit has not lived these later days." No one can look upon his portrait without realizing that his was a very unusual and impressive personality.

Henry Wilder Foote became minister, Dec. 22, 1861.

He was born in Salem, and graduated from Harvard in the class of 1858. He held the place for nearly twenty-eight years, yet he also died too soon, in middle life, when he was but fifty-one years old. No minister could have been better loved by the members of his church and congregation than was Mr. Foote; and he was in all ways as nearly the ideal parish minister as one could desire.

After his death the pulpit was for some years without a regular occupant, a fact less to be deplored because it was often filled by Dr. A. P. Peabody. The present minister was installed in 1895, and Rev. Sydney B. Snow was settled, as associate minister, in 1912.

The tradition which has come down to us through these ministers from an earlier time is very well typified by the dress which they have continued to wear. This dress remains, as nearly as it can be made, exactly that which was worn by the Episcopal clergy of two hundred years ago. There has been no conscious or wilful departure from that form; and it constitutes a kind of standard, by which to measure how unstable and changeable the Episcopal church itself has in later years become. The tradition of which it speaks is that of great love for ancient manners and customs in religion coupled with what aims to be a frank and fearless outlook upon all problems in the life of the present day.

The above sketch is but an abridgment of the large work in two volumes called "Annals of King's Chapel," by Henry Wilder Foote. The whole of that work will repay careful perusal, and is replete with topics of interest that could not be even mentioned here.





